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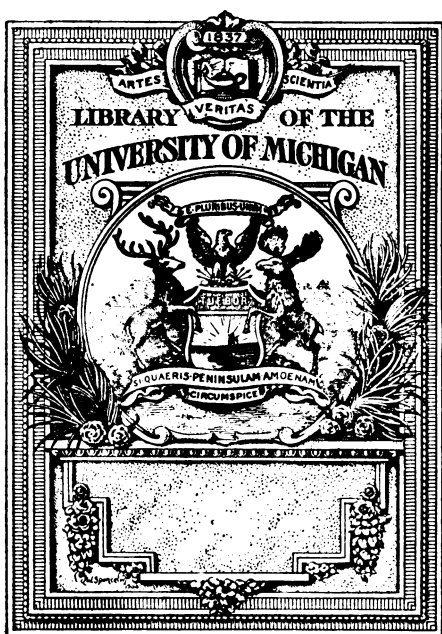
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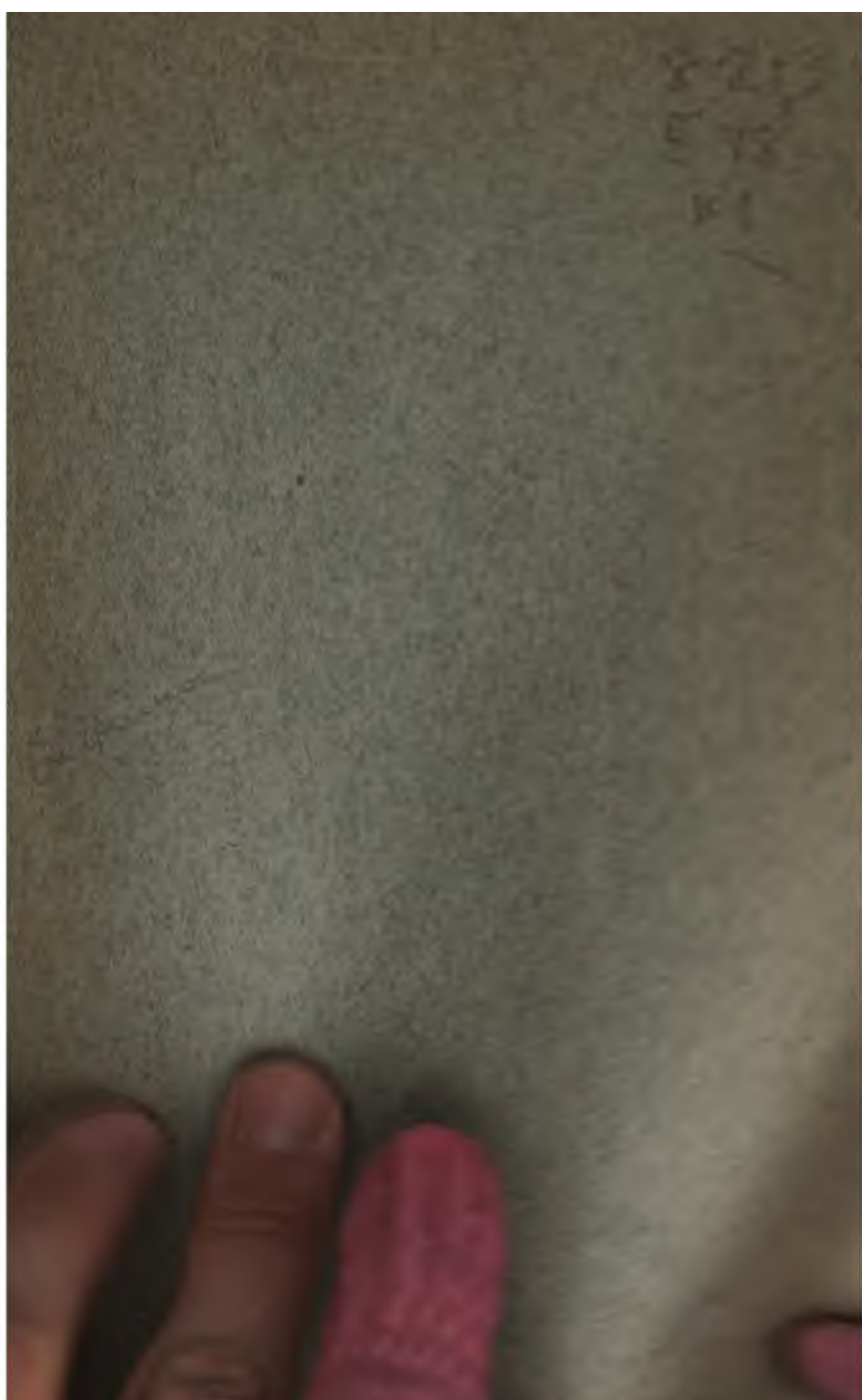
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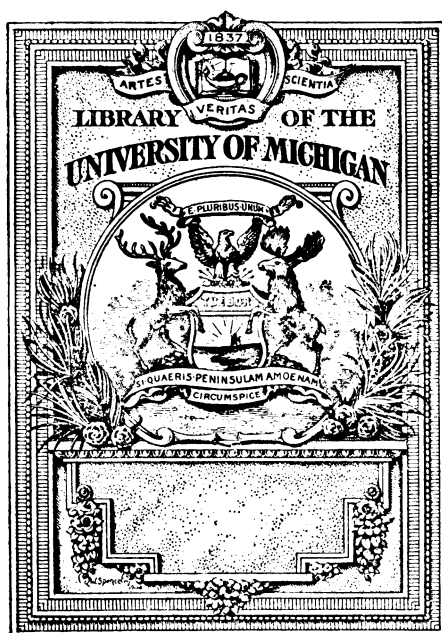






EARLY SCOTTISH POETRY





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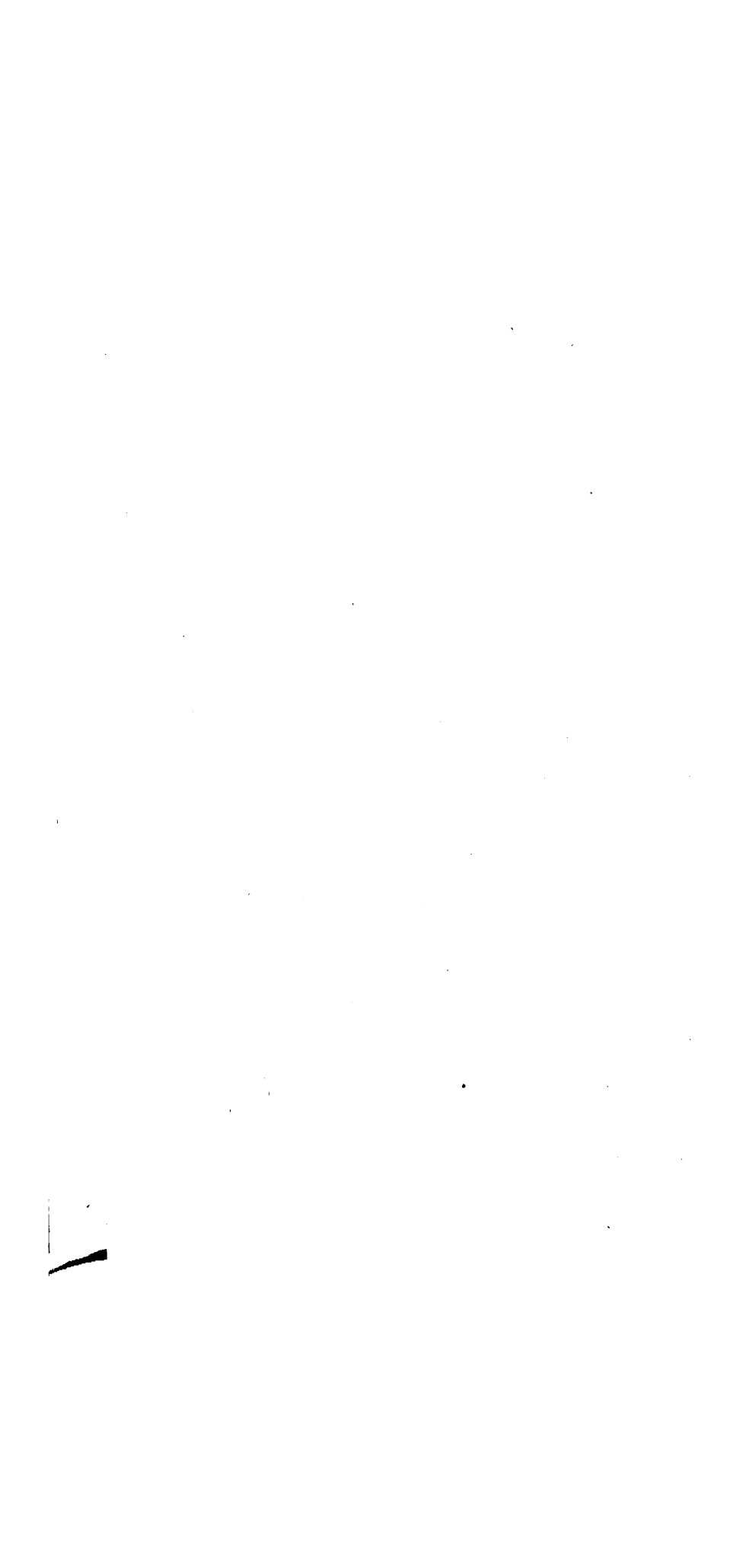


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EARLY SCOTTISH POETRY

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EARLY SCOTTISH POETRY

• THOMAS THE RHYMER
JOHN BARBOUR
ANDROW OF WYNTOUN
HENRY THE MINSTREL

GLASGOW: WILLIAM HODGE & CO

1891

NOTE.

It has long been a reproach that, owing to the absence of an accessible edition, no popular knowledge of the early poetry of Scotland was possible—that, while texts of the early English poets, such as Chaucer, Langland, and Gower, were within reach of all, no such facilities were available for the equally interesting and valuable works of Thomas the Rhymer, Barbour, Wyntoun, and Henry the Minstrel. The present volume is an attempt to supply this want.

From their great bulk the works of the poets here dealt with may with obvious advantage be studied in selected form. In each case, however, an effort has been made, by means of summaries between the selected passages, to afford a view of the entire poem.

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EARLY SCOTTISH POETRY.

ONE of the commonest of popular mistakes upon philological subjects has been the supposition that the Lowland Scots language was nothing more than a rude or corrupted dialect of ordinary English. The making of two dictionaries and the writing of many dissertations have not completely dispelled this impression. Students, however, have long been aware that the popular idea was mistaken ; their only difficulty has been in ascertaining the actual origin of the tongue. Dr. Jamieson, in the earlier Scottish dictionary, was at great pains to prove the language a dialect of Gothic ; and Dr. Charles Mackay, in his more recent compilation, though right in the main, betrayed something of a tendency to advocate Gaelic sources. It is now agreed by those most competent to judge that the tongue spoken in the Scottish lowlands was the most northern of the three great dialects of English. Of these dialects the southern form, once the language

of Kent and Devon, has now all but entirely died out; and while the midland form, by regular evolution, has developed into the written and spoken English of to-day, the northern, by literary use and from the fact of its national foundation, obtained a permanence in Scotland for at least five centuries. It was the language of court and bar, made golden by the tongues of poets and gentle by the lips of fair dames. There are those yet living who say that in their youth there were few pleasures more delightful than to listen to the talk of some old lady who retained the quaint and noble manner of the "auld Scots tongue." This language possessed a charm unknown to our modern speech. English was admitted by Dr. Mackay to be perhaps the most muscular and copious language in the world, but he remarked that it was harsh and sibilant, while the Scottish, with its beautiful terminational derivatives, was almost as soft as Italian. An Englishman, he said, speaks of a "pretty little girl," a Scotsman of a "bonnie wee lassie."

In course of time, owing to the intimate relations of the Scottish court with France, the language of the northern kingdom became strongly tinged with French modes of expression. Indeed, finally it came in many respects to resemble the tongue rather of the

country's ally than of its neighbour. The foreign influence is strongly marked in the language of Dunbar and the later fifteenth and sixteenth century poets, and is conspicuous in the pronunciation of such words as *flours*, more like the French *fleurs* than the English *flowers*. To the present day many words in common use north of the Tweed, such as *fashed* (*fâché*), *ashet* (*assiette*), and *jigot* (*rigot*), are no less than pure French. In the times of earliest Scottish poetry, however, the influence of France had hardly begun to affect Scottish speech, and in that poetry accordingly, a monument is preserved of the Scottish language in something like its native state. It would be impossible to render into modern English of equal simplicity and strength many of the most ordinary passages in this old poetry, and for this reason some regret might be expressed that, at anyrate in Scotland, the study of poems like Barbour's *Bruce* and Henry's *Wallace* is abandoned so completely for the study of early middle-English models. About the verse of the early Scottish poets there is a bloom whose secret has vanished irrevocably with the freshness of their morning-time; but from a study of that verse modern English might at least be enriched with many beautiful words at present without even a counterpart in the language.

No fewer than four distinct races were united in the making of the Scottish nation—the original Picts of the north, the Cymry of Strathclyde, the Scots from Ireland, and the Angles of Northumbria. To these might be added a slight later infusion of Norman blood from the south, and the descendants of the sea-roving Norse and Danes who for centuries built their eyries on the coast and among the western isles. So late as the present day the physical characteristics of each of these separate races are observable everywhere with more or less distinctness in the people of the country. With as much truth, though perhaps more subtly, may the mental characteristics of the different races be distinguished. The fact is marked in Sir Walter Scott's famous saying: "Gentlemen of the north, people of the west, men of the south, and folk of Fife." Pains have been taken by more than one critic to identify the respective qualities of these races in the national poetry. Without going so far, it is possible perhaps to trace thus the origin of one or two of the most salient features of the poetry of the north.

To the Celtic element in the Scottish blood Mr. Stopford Brooke attributes the passionate love of wild nature and the love of colour which everywhere distinguish early Scottish from early English poetry. "There is," he says,

speaking of the special Celtic elements in the Lowland verse, "a passionate, close, and poetical observation and description of natural scenery in Scotland from the earliest times of its poetry such as we do not possess in English poetry till the time of Wordsworth," while "all early Scottish poetry differs from English in the extraordinary way in which colour is insisted upon, and at times in the lavish exaggeration of it." The critic's truth in attributing these characteristics may be easily allowed when it is remembered how largely to the present hour colour tinges the nomenclature of the Highlands, and how full of tenderness for glen and stream the Highlander still remains. The same delight in colour may be seen in such passages of the early *Sir Tristrem* as the description of Ysonde :

Ysonde of highe priis,
The maiden bright of hewe
That wered fow and griis
And scarlet that was newe.

The same tenderness for wild nature may be remarked in delicate descriptive passages like the opening of a certain scene of *The Bruce* :

This wes in ver, quhen wynter tid,
With his blastis hidwyss to bid,
Was our drywyn : and birdis smale,
As turturis and the nyctyngale,
Begouth rycht sariely to syng,
And for to mak in thair singyng

Swete notis and sownys ser
And melodys plesand to her,
And the treis beguth to ma
Burgeans and brycht blomys alsua.

Equally, perhaps, to the Cymric blood may be traced the enthusiasm of nationality which everywhere inspires the poetry of the north. The emigrant Highlander at the present day pines for the "white shieling," and the "yellow island," the "blue mountains," and the "nut-brown maid" he has forsaken ; but no less does the modern farmer of the Clyde valley and the Lanark moors waken to a lively energy at mention of Wallace and the wars with the English. It was in the west that independence always was first asserted, alike in the times of Wallace, of Bruce, and of the later Covenanters ; and in the light of this fact it seems fair to attribute something at least of the strenuous nationality of Scottish poetry, from Barbour's *Bruce* to Burns' *Scots wha hae*, to the strain of British blood in the race.

It cannot be supposed that in the poems which remain to us we possess the very earliest efforts of the Scottish muse. Song is the first of all the arts to make its appearance, and in the two hundred years from the time when Malcolm Canmore, marrying a Saxon wife, began to discourage Celtic as the language of his court, till the time of Thomas the Rhymer, it is not likely that minstrelsy was mute in

the country. Allusions indeed are not lacking which show that the reading or hearing of romances was at an early time a popular relaxation in Scotland; and there appears to be reason for believing, as Dr. Irving in his *History of Scottish Poetry* suggested, that the earliest authentic Scottish poem, the *Sir Tristrem* of Thomas the Rhymer, was one of a cycle of romances upon the adventures of ancient, half-mythical Cymric heroes which formed the popular north-country poetry until the newly-welded Scottish race came, in Wallace, Bruce, and Douglas, to possess national heroes more particularly its own. Whether or not this be the case, it may be pointed out that in Scottish poetry there exists, complete and unbroken from very early times, a golden vein of historic material. From iron facts—from the deeds of kings, the fortunes of war, the loss and gain of provinces—the historian of Scotland may limn upon his canvas the outer features of the nation's past. For his subtler purposes there remains this more delicate resource. Poetry in Scotland has ever been, not only a criticism, but a reflection of life, and a reflection which, like that in the Arabian mirror, has shown not alone the deeds and manners of its time, but the thoughts behind the deeds.

Like one of Scotland's own mountain streams the course of Scottish poetry can be traversed

almost in a day's journey, and at every turn it is seen to have taken its character from its surroundings. From its earliest traces in romance recited to the knights errant of a heroic age, rushing bold and strong down rough defiles in the national war-epics of Barbour and Blind Harry, it is found sunning itself presently in the love-song of James through a primrose strath of peace. At each descent the passion which inspires the verse was the spirit of its age. The wandering knights who after the Conquest pushed their fortunes into the north saw their ideals mirrored in the adventures of a hero like Sir Tristrem. The people new-welded into a single nation by the wars of succession, and battling still against heavy odds for freedom, heard their aspirations echoed in the verse of the chronicler-poets. And the sweet lay penned by the Scottish king heralded the incoming of a gentler time.

Alike as the illustration of a beautiful and heroic old language, as a richly-sparkling fountain of emotion, eloquence, and enthusiasm, and as a reflection, in bright, unfading colours, of the national mind and manners of the north in times that have passed away, the early poetry of Scotland holds a place and character peculiarly its own in the gallery of English literature.

THOMAS THE RHYMER.



THOMAS THE RHYMER.

ON the shadowy borderland between myth and reality, in the early literary history of Scotland, stands The Rhymer, Thomas of Ercildoune. Few names are more familiar than his in the folk-lore of the north, yet regarding few is so little generally known. With his fame as a maker of early Scottish romance a weird reputation for prophecy has been handed down by tradition, while in the ancient ballad poetry of the Borders he is celebrated as the hero of elfin adventure. In this respect he stands on the same platform as Michael Scott and Merlin the Wild, with the latter of whom he has sometimes been confounded; and in the three cases it is curious to note how the superstition of a rude age has, with or without their own connivance, invested the poet and the religious ascetic with the gift of prophecy, and the student of nature with the powers of the wizard.

Of the actual facts of the Rhymer's life very little is known. His name itself even has been subject of speculation. Scott in his introduction to *Sir Tristrem* stated that according to uniform popular

tradition the poet's surname was Learmont, and that the appellation of 'The Rhymer' was conferred on him in consequence of his poetical compositions. But the same writer also remarks that surnames were not yet always hereditary in the 13th century. It has never been disputed, however, that the residence and probable birthplace of the bard was Ercildoune, now Earlstoun, a village on the Leader Water two miles above its junction with the Tweed. After the lapse of eight centuries a ruined tower known as his dwelling-place may still be seen at the western extremity of the village. In a deed of the thirteenth century by Peter de Haga de Bemersyde, in the chartulary of Melrose, the Rhymer appears as a witness; and a charter is extant in the Advocates' Library at Edinburgh by which Thomas of Ercildoune, "son and heir of Thomas Rymour of Ercildoune," conveys his family lands to the Church of the Holy Trinity of Soltra. The latter deed is dated 1299, and from the two charters, and a reference by Henry the Minstrel, the poet's life may be roughly estimated as extending from about 1220 to 1298.

Whether he himself explicitly assumed the character of seer in order to give greater weight to his political advice is impossible to say. Jamieson, in his *Popular Ballads*, suggested that, "in order to give a sanction to his predictions, which seem all to have been calculated in one way or other for the service of his country, the Rhymer pretended to an intercourse with the Queen of Elfland, as Numa Pompilius did with the nymph Egeria." This may have been the

case, or the story may be altogether a popular and later invention ; but the narrative of his intercourse with the elfin queen, whether composed by himself or not, is extant to the present day, and forms one of the most characteristic of the Border ballads. According to this ballad, Thomas sojourned with the queen in Elfland for seven years, though to him it seemed "nought but the space of dayis three." At parting, by way of consolation, she revealed to her sorrowing lover a long roll of prophecies, and as a farewell token conferred on Thomas himself the prophetic gift :

If thou wilt spell or talès tell,
Thomas, thou never shall make lee.

With a story of this sort once established in the popular mind it is easy to see how the Rhymer might acquire the reputation of a prophet. There exists, as has been said, no absolute proof that he assumed the prophetic *rôle* himself, but it is certain that very shortly after his death the foresight of many momentous events was attributed to him. The most striking of these perhaps is that of the accidental death of Alexander III. at Kinghorn, and the subsequent disastrous wars of succession. The story is related both by Fordun and Boece. The latter, translated by Bellenden, gives it with no small dramatic skill. "It is said the day afore the kingis deith the Erle of Marche demandit ane prophet namit Thomas Rymour, otherwayis namit Ersiltoun, quhat wedder suld be on the morow. To quhome answerit this Thomas that on the

morow, afore noun, sall blow the gretist wynd that ever was hard afore in Scotland. On the morow, quhen it was neir noun, the lift appering lounne, but (without) ony din or tempest, the Erle send for this propheit and reprevit hym that he prognosticat sic wynd to be, and nae apperance thairof. This Thomas maid litel answer, bot said, noun is not yet gane. And incontinent ane man came to the yet (gate) schawing the king was slane. Than said the prophet, yone is the wynd that sall blaw to the gret calamity and truble of al Scotland." Prophecies attributed to the Rhymer are recorded by Barbour, Wyntoun, and Blind Harry, and are mentioned in the *Scala-chronicon*, a history written, it is supposed, in the time of Edward III. Bits of local prophecy quoted as his were floating in the popular mind so late as the beginning of the present century, and may indeed remain in currency to the present day. One of these is pathetic enough:

The hare sall kittle (litter) on my hearth stane,
And there will never be a laird Learmont again.

Most of the extant political rhymes passing as the prophecies of True Thomas are to be found, with other productions of the same sort, in a small volume published by Andro Hart at Edinburgh in 1615.

Behind all this popular tradition of elfin intercourse and prophetic insight, however, Thomas the Rhymer claims the solid reputation of maker of the earliest Scottish romance. There exist two other compositions of competing claim—the romances of *Gawen and*

Gologras and *Galoran of Galloway*—both also attributed by Scott to the thirteenth century. Strong doubts as to their date, however, have been expressed by later critics, while their rudeness and excessive alliteration render them hardly intelligible. *Sir Tristrem* therefore may fairly be looked upon, not only as the most outstanding, but as the earliest extant poem of the north.

The poem is contained in the famous Auchinleck manuscript, "a portly quarto volume of early English poetry written on vellum in the beginning of the fourteenth century," and presented to the Advocates' Library in 1744 by Lord Auchinleck, father of Boswell, the biographer of Johnson. The former history of the volume is unknown. From this source *Sir Tristrem* was very fully edited by Scott in 1804, and in 1886 was made still further accessible in an admirable edition for the Scottish Text Society by Mr. G. P. M'Neill.

It is true of this, of course, as of most other productions of obscure times, that the authorship has been subjected to question. The point upon which doubt has been chiefly urged is the opening stanza of the romance:

Y was at Ertheldoune
With Tomas spak Y thare, &c.

It may be possible to make too much of this point. The insertion of his name in the text was in early times a poet's only method of perpetuating his claims of authorship. After detailing all that has been said for and against the authenticity

of the romance, Mr. M'Neill quotes the direct testimony of the Rhymer's contemporary, Robert Mannyng of Brunne, and concludes by remarking that "the arguments which assail the trustworthiness of these documents are suggested by somewhat hypercritical doubts, and the theories designed to supplant them are based upon conjectures wholly unsupported by evidence."

The invention of the story told in the poem, however, cannot be attributed to the Rhymer. The tale of Tristrem most probably had a foundation in the exploits of an actual chieftain of the ancient Cymric kingdom of western Britain. In the early Welsh Triads Tristrem appears, already famous, chiefly as the lover of Essylt, wife of his uncle Mark. In the history of King Arthur, compiled by Geoffrey of Monmouth in the ninth century, the hero is recorded as one of the knights of the Round Table. Frequent mention of the story of Tristrem and Isolde is found in the twelfth and thirteenth century songs of the troubadours and trouveres of France; and it formed one of the four great romances of Cymric tradition recited at the court of the Anglo-Norman kings. It is for casting the romance into Scottish verse that credit is given to the Rhymer; and his composition soon became known throughout Europe as the best version of the famous tale. Robert of Brunne declared—

Ouer gestes it has the steem,
Ouer all that is or was,
If men it sayd as made Thomas.

After wanderings down the centuries in almost every tongue of Europe, the story is found living yet in modern days in the verse of Richard Wagner, Matthew Arnold, Lord Tennyson, and Mr. Swinburne.

As it remains, the early Scottish composition is a vivid example, as indeed it was perhaps the most famous model, of the romances of chivalry. Already the story had lost the primitive simplicity of legend and had had incorporated with it all the mediæval devices of plot and motive. Love and arms are the subjects—the rescue of usurped kingdoms and the prosecution of amorous intrigues. To these ends giants and dragons have to be overcome and a love-potion has to be drunk. These were the regular machinery of the singers of Europe in the Middle Ages. The chief thread of the narrative bears that the British knight Tristrem is sent to bring home from Ireland his uncle's bride Isonde, and by the mistaken drinking of a love-philtre by the two on the way, becomes engaged in an amour which occupies the remainder of the lovers' lives. Stratagems, estrangements, stolen interviews follow, a very doubtful regard is paid to conjugal relations, and the whole tale forms material for somewhat curious speculation upon the morals and habits of a society which had these romances for its approved intellectual food.

The poem is written in an involved stanza in striking contrast to the simple style of the narrative and the obvious eagerness of the narrator to press on with his tale. The design of the composition,

as in most old romances, is of the character best adapted for recitation—a series of adventures, each complete in itself, strung upon the lives of the lovers. At the same time there is a certain arrangement, a proportion and balance of parts round the central idea, which give to the story an artistic unity. The situations frequently possess strong dramatic point, as when Tristrem, having drunk the love-potion with Isonde, has to fulfil his mission and hand her over in marriage to the king. Most notable of all, the characters of the tale from first to last are firmly and even subtly drawn. Limned from the outside by their actions and words, they stand distinct as if reproduced from life or from the most intimate tradition. Reliably as in actual contact one comes to know them all—Isonde, another Lady Macbeth, crafty of brain and passionate of heart; “Brengwain the Bright,” the maid and confidant of the queen, careful by the possession of compromising secrets to keep Isonde in her power, but at the same time both lending her wits and submitting her person to screen her mistress; Mark, the rich king and foolish husband, tricked and deceived, yielding up his queen, Herod-like, for a minstrel’s song, and ever ready to believe a protestation in face of the clearest evidence; and Tristrem, the doughty knight, skilled alike in arts and arms, fertile in amorous devices, and faithful everywhere to the lady of his passion. Even the subordinate characters are touched to the life. A modern analytic poet might be glad to own a delicate bit of motive-painting like the scene in

which Sir Canados woos Isonde and receives his answer.

The example of Sir Tristrem had some following in Scottish poetry. To the Rhymer himself Scott was inclined to attribute *Hornchild, or The Geste of King Horn*, a romantic narrative poem extant in six-syllable couplets. There exist also the two alliterative Arthurian romances before-mentioned of *Gawen and Gologras* and *Galoran of Galloway*; *The Pystyl of Swete Susan*, a poem in involved stanza like that of *Sir Tristrem*, but of longer line, on the Apocryphal subject of Susanna; and *The Taill of Rauf Coilzear, how he harbreit King Charles*, a vigorous romance concerning Charlemagne and Ralph a collier, similar in incident to the story of King Alfred and the shepherd. But another inspiration was already in the air. Shortly after the composition of *Sir Tristrem* the last of the line of Celtic kings fell over the fatal cliff at Kinghorn, and amid the dire wars of succession and independence a new era dawned upon the history and literature of Scotland.

THE selections from *Sir Tristrem* which are here given include the most salient episodes of the romance. No liberties have been taken with the text, saving the insertion of capitals for the first personal pronoun and at proper names. The ancient spelling, *yiue* (give), *yuere* (ivere, ivory), *tviis* (twice), possesses a historic interest of its own. The chief peculiarity of the composition is its elliptic style :

That man hye neuer seighe
That bifor Tristrem wold,

is left to stand for

That man she never saw
That before Tristrem she would choose.

Notwithstanding this obstacle it is curious to discover how clearly the meaning appears when the stanzas are read aloud. Phonetically the language differs but little from modern English.

SIR TRISTREM.



WAS at Ertheldoune :

With Tomas spak Y thare ;

Ther herd Y rede in rounne¹

¹ rune, perhaps
rhythm.

Who Tristrem gat and bare,

Who was king with croun,

And who him forsterd yare²,

² fostered
willingly.

And who was bold baroun,

As thair elders ware.

Bi yere³

³ year by year.

Tomas tells in toun

This auentours⁴ as thai ware.

⁴ adventures.

The Birth of Tristrem.

[Truce having been declared between two chiefs, the Duke Morgan and Rouland Riis, Lord of Ermonie, the latter betakes himself to the court of King Mark. Victorious at a tournament, he becomes the object of a passion on the part of the king's sister, Blancheflour, who, the knight presently being wounded, visits him secretly in his chamber. Word, however, arrives from Rohand, a trusty vassal, that Morgan has broken the truce. Rouland therefore, followed by Blancheflour, takes leave of Mark.]

Thai busked and maked hem boun⁵,

⁵ prepared and
made ready.

Nas ther no leng abade ;

¹ raised ensign.

Thai lefted goinfainoun¹,
 And out of hauen thai rade
 Till thai com til atoun,
 A castel Rohand had made.
 Her sailes thai leten doun,
 And knight, ouer bord thai strade
 Al cladde.

² brave, faithful.

The knightes that wer fade²,
 Thai dede as Rohand bade.

Rohand right he radde:—

“This maiden schal ben oure,
 Rouland Riis to wedde,
 At weld³ in castel tour,
 To bring hir to his bedde
 That brightest is in hour.
 Nas neuer non fairer fedde⁴
 Than Maiden Blaunche flour
 Al blithe.”

³ to rule.⁴ nourished.⁵ much honour.⁶ swiftly.

After that michel anour⁵
 Parting com ther swithe⁶.

⁷ in public it was not hidden.⁸ amiably (meekly) 'gan mix.⁹ speak.¹⁰ summons.

In hird nas nought to hele⁷
 That Morgan telles in toun,
 Mekeliche he gan mele⁸
 Among his men to roun⁹;
 He bad his knightes lele
 Come to his somoun¹⁰

With hors and wepenes fele
 And rered goinfaynoun,
 That bold.
 He rode so king with croun
 To win al that he wold.

Of folk the feld was brade,
 Ther Morgan men gan bide¹;
 Tho Rouland to hem rade,
 Oyain him gun thai ride;
 Swiche meting nas neuer made
 With sorwe on ich aside.
 Ther of was Rouland glade,
 Ful fast he feld² her pride.
 With paine
 Morgan scaped that tide
 That he nas nought slain.

¹ abide, take up
position.

² felled.

Morganes folk cam newe³
 Of Rouland Riis the gode,
 On helmes gun thai hewe,
 Thurch brinies brast⁴ the blod;
 Sone to deth ther drewe
 Mani a frely fode⁵.
 Of Rouland was to rewe⁶,
 To grounde when he yode⁷,
 That bold:
 His sone him after stode,
 And dere his deth he sold.

³ came anew
upon.

⁴ through helmet
burst.

⁵ noble person.

⁶ rue,

⁷ go-ed, went.

Rewthe mow⁸ ye here
 Of Rouland Riis the knight:

⁸ sorrow must.

Threhundred he slough there
 With his swerd bright;
 Of all tho that ther were
 Might none him felle in fight,
 But on with tresoun there
 Thurch the bodi him pight¹.
 With gile
 To deth he him dight—
 Allas that ich while!

¹ pierced.

His hors o feld him bare
 Alle ded hom in his way;
 Gret wonder hadde he thought thare
 That folk of ferly play².
 The tiding com with care
 To Blaunche flour, that may³.
 For hir me reweth sare:
 On child bed ther sche lay
 Was born
 Of hir Tristrem that day,
 Ac hye no bade⁴ nought that morn.

² Great wonder had he gained by his marvelous activity.

³ damsel.

⁴ But she lingered not.

A ring of rich hewe
 Than hadde that leuedi fre⁵;
 Sche toke it Rouhand trewe,
 Hir sone sche bad it be:—
 "Mi brother wele it knewe,
 Mi fader yaf⁶ it me;

⁵ noble lady.

⁶ gave.

King Markes may rewe,
 The ring, than he it se,
 And moun.
 As Rouland loued the,
 Thou kepe it to his sone."

'The folk stode vnfain'
 Bifor that leuedi`fre:—
 "Rouland, mi lord, is slain,
 He speketh no more with me.
 That leuedi, nought to lain²,
 For sothe³ ded is sche.
 Who may be ogain?
 As God wil it schal be,
 Vnblithe."
 Sorwe it was to se,
 That leuedi sweltd swithe⁴.

¹ sad.

² not to dispute,
 without a doubt.
³ forsooth.

⁴ died soon.

Geten and born was so
 The child, was fair and white.
 Nas neuer Rohand so wo,
 He nist⁵ it whom to wite⁶.
 'To child bed ded he go
 His owen wiif al so tite⁷,
 And seyde he hadde children to,
 On hem was his delite
 Bi crist.
 In court men cleped⁸ him so:—
 Tho tram bifor the trist.

⁵ wist not.

⁶ to blame, to put
 it upon.

⁷ quickly.

⁸ called.

Tristrem at the Court of Mark.

[For fifteen years Tristrem, disguised as Tramtrist, is educated by Rohand, becoming marvellously expert in all knightly games, in minstrelsy, and hunting. At last, one day, Tristrem having won heavily at chess from the master of a Norwegian vessel, the latter, to avoid payment, carries his opponent off. A heavy storm constraining the master of the vessel to put him ashore, Jonahlike, in England, Tristrem makes his way by chance to the court of Mark, and there, by his skill in music and ventry, becomes a favourite of the king. Meanwhile Rohand, searching through seven kingdoms for his foster-son, arrives at last at the palace gate. On account of his tattered and travel-stained clothes he is refused entrance, first by the porter, then by the usher.]

The pouer man of mold
 Tok forth another ring,
 The huscher he yaf the gold,
 It seemed to a king;
 Formest tho in fold¹
 He lete him in thring²;
 To Tristrem trewe in hold
 He hete³ he wold him bring,
 And brought;
 Tristrem knewe him no thing,
 And ferly⁴ Rohand thought.

¹ Foremost then
 among the folk.

² press in.

³ promised.

⁴ strangely.

Thei men Tristrem had sworn,
 He no trowed⁵ it neuer in lede⁶
 That Rohand robes were torn,
 That he wered swiche awede⁷.
 He frained⁸ him biforn⁹:—
 "Child, so God the rede¹⁰,

⁵ believed.

⁶ indeed (*lit.*
 among the
 people).

⁷ wore such a
 dress.

⁸ asked.

⁹ before, first.

¹⁰ judge.

How were thou fram Rohand lorn¹?

Monestow neuer² in lede?"

Nought lain

He kneled better spede

And kist Rohand ful fain.

¹ lost.

² Rememberest
thou never.

"Fader, no wretthe the nought³,

Ful welcome er ye!

Bi God, that man hath bought,

No thing no knewe Y the;

With sorwe thou hast ine sought,

To wite it wo is me!"

To Mark the word he brought,

"Wil ye mi fader se

With sight?

Graithed⁴ Y wil he be,

And seththen⁵ schewe him as knight."

³ be not wrath-
ful.

⁴ clad.

⁵ afterwards
(*mod. Scot. syne*).

Tristrem to Mark it seyde,

His auentours, as it were,

Hou he with schipmen pleyde,

Of lond hou thai him bere,

Hou stormes hem bi stayed,

Til anker hem brast and are⁶.

"Thai yolden⁷ me that Y layde

With al mi wining there

In hand;

Y clambe the holtes hare⁸

Till Y thine hunters fand."

⁶ anchor and oar
broke.

⁷ yielded.

⁸ woods hoar.

¹ rough.² head.³ a scarlet robe
fur-lined.

A bath thai brought Rohand inne,
 A barbour was redi thare;
 Al rowe¹ it was, his chinne,
 His heued² was white of hare;
 A scarlet with riche skinne³
 Ybrought him was ful yare.
 Rohand of noble kinne,
 That robe ful fair he bare,
 That bold;
 Who that had seyn him thare
 A prince him might han told.

⁴ thither he let
him come.⁵ way.⁶ knew.

Fair his tale bi gan
 Rohand; thei he com lat⁴;
 Tristrem, that honour can,
 To halle led him the gate⁵.
 Ich man seyde than
 Nas non swiche, as thai wate⁶,
 As was the pouer man
 That thai bete fram the gat
 With care;
 Nas non that wald him hate,
 Bot welcom was he thare.

⁷ drawn.⁸ pleasant.⁹ servants.¹⁰ ready.

Water thai asked swithe,
 Cloth and board was drain⁷
 With mete and drink lithe⁸
 And seriaunce⁹ that were bayn¹⁰
 To serve Tristrem swithe
 And Sir Rohand ful fayn;

Whasche¹, when thai wald rise,
 The king ros him oyain
 That tide;
 In lede is nought to layn²,
 He sett him bi his side.

¹ wash.² in company is not to be disputed, to be brief.

Rohand that was thare,
 To Mark his tale bi gan:—
 “Wist ye what Tristrem ware,
 Miche gode ye wold him an³.
 Your owheñ soster him bare,”
 —The king lithed⁴ him than—
 “Y nam sibbe⁵ him na mare,
 Ich aught⁶ to ben his man,
 Sir king.
 Knowe it yiue⁷ ye can,
 Sche taught⁸ me this ring

³ grant.⁴ listened to.⁵ kin to.⁶ owned.⁷ gif, if.⁸ entrusted to.

When Rouland Riis the bold
 Douke Morgan gan mete.”
 The tale when Rohand told,
 For sorwe he gan grete⁹.
 The king biheld that old,
 How his wonges¹⁰ were wete.
 To Mark the ring¹¹ he yold,
 He knewe it al so sket¹¹,
 Gan loke:
 He kist Tristrem ful skete,
 And for his nevou¹² toke.

⁹ weep.¹⁰ cheeks.¹¹ quickly.¹² nephew.

¹ then they
kissed.

Tho thai kisten¹ him alle,
Bothe leuedi and knight
And seriaunce in the halle
And maidens that were bright.

² asked.

Tristrem gan Rohand calle,
And freined² him with sight:—

“Sir, how may this falle?
How may Y proue it right?

³ in short.

Nought lain³
Tel me, for Godes might,
How was mi fader slain?”

Tristrem's Revenge.

[Told of the death of his father and mother by Morgan's treachery, Tristrem at last obtains Mark's permission to make war. He is knighted by the king, and, sailing for Ermonie, garrisons Rohand's castle with a thousand men. Grown weary there of inaction, he determines to put his fortune to a personal issue.]

“With Morgan speke wil Y
And spede.

So long idel we ly,
Myself mai do mi nede.”

⁴ promised.

Tristrem dede as he hight⁴.

⁵ ready.

He busked and made him yare⁵

⁶ His fifteen
knights.

Hi fiftend som of knight⁶,

⁷ gaed, went.

With him yede⁷ na mare.

To court thai com ful right

⁸ sheared, cut.

As Morgan his brede schare⁸;

Thai teld tho bi sight
 Ten kinges sones thai ware;
 Vn sought
 Heuedes of wild bare
 Ichon¹ to presant brought.

¹ each one.

Rohand bi gan to sayn²,
 To his knightes than seyde he:—
 “As woman is, tviis for lain³,
 Y may say bi me.
 Yif Tristrem be now sleyn,
 Yuel yemers⁴ er we.
 To armes, knight and swayn,
 And swiftly ride ye
 And swithe!
 Till Y Tristrem se,
 No worth⁵ Y neuer blithe.”

² speak.

³ As a woman
 who is twice
 seduced.

⁴ ill guardians.

⁵ become.

Tristrem speke bi gan:—
 “Sir King, God loke⁶ the
 As Y the loue and an⁷
 And thou hast serued to me!”
 The Douke answerd than:—
 “Y pray, mi lord so fre,
 Whether thou bless or ban,
 Thine owen mot it be,
 Thou bold!
 Thi nedes tel thou me,
 Thine erand, what thou wold.”

⁶ look on.

⁷ regard.

"Amendes! Mi fader is slain,
 Mine hirritage Hermonie!"
 The Douk answerd ogain:—
 "Certes, thi fader than slough Y.
 Seththen¹ thou so hast sayd,
 Amendes ther ought to ly.
 Ther fore, prout swayn,
 So schal Y the; for thi
 Right than
 Artow comen titly²
 Fram Marke thi kinsman.

¹ syne, there-
after.

² Thou art come
quickly.

"Yongling, thou schalt abide!
 Foles thou wendest to fand³!
 Thi fader thi moder gan hide,
 In horedom he hir band⁴.
 How comestow with pride?
 Out, traitour, of mi land!"
 Tristrem spac that tide:—
 "Thou lext⁵, ich vnder stand
 And wot⁶!"
 Morgan with his hand
 With a lof Tristrem smot.

³ weenedst to
find.

⁴ bound.

⁵ liest.

⁶ know.

On his brest adoun
 Of his nose ran the blod.
 Tristrem swerd was boun,
 And near the Douke he stode.*

* * * * *
 * * * * *

* Two lines are here wanting, as is evident from the difference in the stanza, though there is no blank in the MS.

With that, was comen to toun
 Rohand with help ful gode
 And gayn¹.
 Al that oyain² hem stode
 Wightly³ were thai slayn.

¹ pleasant.² against.³ quickly.

To prisoun thai gun take
 Erl, baroun, and knight.
 For Douke Morgan sake,
 Mani on dyd down right.
 Schaftes they gun shake
 And riuen scheldes bright
 Crounes thai gun crake
 Mani, ich wene, aplight⁴.
 Saunfayl⁵,
 Bitvene the none and the night
 Last the batayle.

⁴ outright.⁵ without pause.

Thus hath Tristrem the swete
 Yslawe the Douke Morgan.
 No wold he neuer lete⁶
 Til mo castels were tan⁷;
 Tounes thai yold him skete,
 And cites stithe of stan⁸.
 The folk fel to his fet,
 Ayaines him stode ther nan
 In land.
 He slough his fader ban,⁹
 Al bowed to his hand.

⁶ forbear.⁷ ta'en.⁸ strong of stone.⁹ father's
murderer.

¹ ruled.

Two yere he sett¹ that land,
His lawes made he cri.

Al com to his hand,
Almain, and Ermonie,
At his wil to stand
Boun and al redy.

² gave.

Rohand he yaf² the wand,
And bad him sitt him bi,

³ noble.

That fre³.
"Rohand lord make Y,
To held this lond of me."

Tristrem's Teaching of Ysonde.

[Returned to his uncle's court, Tristrem finds the country groaning under a huge, unjust tribute demanded by Ireland—three hundred pounds each of gold, coined silver, and brass, and every fourth year three hundred children. Tristrem persuades the council to refuse, takes upon himself the denial of the tribute, and in a great duel with Moraunt, the Irish ambassador, cleaves that champion's skull. At the same time he is himself wounded, and the wound gangrenes. He lies ill for three years. At last, despairing of cure and forsaken by all because of his wound's stench, he asks a ship. In this he drifts from Carlion to Dublin. There his skill in music, chess, and tables enlists the interest of the queen, who, expert in surgery, after the manner of the ladies of that day, undertakes his cure. The queen is sister to the dead Moraunt, but, remembering his duel, Tristrem has taken care to assume the name of Tramtris, and to declare himself a merchant robbed by pirates. As an accomplished companion he is frequently invited to court, and there he turns his skill to good account.]

⁴ was called.

The king had a douhter dere
That maiden Ysonde hight⁴,

⁵ song.⁶ lief, pleased.

That gle⁵ was lef⁶ to here

And romaunce to rede aright.

⁷ teach.

Sir Tramtris hir gan lere⁷

Tho with al his might
 What alle pointes¹ were,
 To se the sothe² in sight,
 To say.
 In Yrlond nas no knight
 With Ysonde durst play.

¹ accomplish-
 ments.

² truth.

Ysonde of heighe priis³,
 The maiden bright of hewe
 That wered fow and griis⁴
 And scarlet that was newe.
 In warld was non so wiis
 Of craft that men knewe
 With outen Sir Tramtris,
 That al games of grewe
 On grounde.

³ praise, fame.

⁴ fur and grey
 furred cloth.

Hom longeth⁵ Tramtris the trewe,
 For heled was his wounde.

⁵ entertains with
 fair talk.

Sir Tramtris in Irlond
 Duelled al ayere.
 So gode likeing⁶ he fand
 That hole he was and fere.
 The Quen to fot and hand
 He serued dern and dere⁷;
 Ysonde he dede vnder stand
 What alle playes were
 In lay⁸.

⁶ entertainment.

⁷ secretly and
 with favour.

⁸ law.

His leue he asked at here
 In schip to founde⁹ oway.

⁹ go.

The Embassy for Ysonde.

[Returned to the court of Mark, Tristrem is received with great joy by his uncle, and has to give a full account of his absence and cure. He dilates upon the charms of Ysonde, and the king, struck by the description, offers to make Tristrem his heir if he will bring the princess to Cornwall. The idea pleases the jealous barons.]

In Ingland ful wide
 The barouns hem bi thought
 To fel Tristremes pride
 How thai fairest mought;
 The king thai rad to ride¹,
 A quen to him thai sought,
 That Tristrem might abide²
 That he no were³ it nought,
 No king:
 Thai seyð that Tristrem mought
 Ysonde of Irlond bring.

¹ counselled to
 rid himself of
 (Tristrem).

² suffer.

³ become.

⁴ chose.

⁵ of such sort.

⁶ lies.

⁷ leasing, treason.

⁸ foolish.

⁹ strange, silly.

A brid bright thai ches⁴
 As blod opon snoweing:
 "A maiden of swiche reles⁵,
 Tristrem may to the bring."
 Quoth Tristrem:—"It is les⁶,
 And troweth it for lesing⁷;
 To aski that neuer no wes,
 It is a fole⁸ askeing
 Bi kinde;
 It is a selli⁹ thing,
 For no man may it finde.

"Y rede ¹ ye nought no striue;	¹ counsel.
A swalu Ich herd sing,	
Ye sigge Ich wern mi nem to wiue ² ,	² Ye say I dare my uncle to wed.
For Y schuld be your king.	
Now bringeth me atte riue ³	³ (<i>à la rive</i>) shore.
Schip and other thing.	
Ye se me neuer oliue ⁴	⁴ Ye will never see me alive.
Bot yif Ich Ysonde bring,	
That bright.	
Finde me min askeing,	
Mine fiftend som of knight."	

The Drinking of the Love-potion.

[Tristrem sails for Ireland with rich presents, to find the people of Dublin in dire terror. They are threatened by a monstrous dragon which has done so much damage that the hand of Ysonde is offered to him who shall slay it. Tristrem undertakes the adventure, and after a dreadful encounter slays the beast. Cutting out the dragon's tongue he attempts to carry it away in his hose, but is overcome by its poison. Presently the king's steward, passing, cuts off the dragon's head, carries it to court, and claims the victory and the hand of Ysonde. The princess disbelieves the tale, and proceeding with her mother to the scene of encounter, finds Tristrem. Revived by their aid, he claims the victory, proves his claim by producing the tongue, and pledges his ship and cargo that he will make good his story upon the person of the steward. So dignified is the supposed merchant's bearing that Ysonde exclaims "Alas that thou art not knight!" While Tristrem is in a bath Ysonde discovers that a break in his sword fits a fragment of steel which had been taken from the skull of her uncle Moraunt. With her mother she rushes to despatch the champion in his bath, but the king interposes. Tristrem defends himself as having slain Moraunt in fair fight. Smiling upon Ysonde, he tells her that he is her late preceptor Tramtris, and asks her why she did not slay him when she had opportunity before. Finally he declares his embassy. The match is accepted, the steward relinquishing his claim, is thrown into prison at Ysonde's request, and preparation is made for the voyage of the princess.]

Tristrem swore that thing ;
 Thai seyð it schuld stand
 That he schuld Ysonde bring
 —Thai token it vnder hand—
 To Marke, the riche king,
 Oliue yif thai him fand,
 And make hir with his ring,
 Quen of Ingeland,
 To say ;
 The forward¹ fast thai band²
 Er thai parted oway.

¹ compact.
² bound.

No asked he lond no lithe³,
 Bot that maiden bright ;
 He busked him al so swithe⁴,
 Both squier and knight.
 Her moder about was blithe
 And tok adrink of might,
 That loue wald kithe⁵,
 And tok it Brengwain the bright
 To think :
 “At er spouseing a night
 Yif Mark and hir to drink.”

³ neither land nor
 people.

⁴ speedily.

⁵ beget.

Ysonde bright of hewe
 Is fer out in the se.
 A winde oyain hem blewe
 That sail no might ther be.
 So rewe⁶ the knightes trewe,
 Tristrem, so rewe he,
 Euer as thai com newe—

⁶ rowed.

He on oyain hem thre¹—
 Gret swink².
 Swete Ysonde the fre
 Asked Bringwain adrink.

¹ He one against
 three of them.

² toil.

The coupe was richeli wrought,
 Of gold it was, the pin*;
 In al the world nas nought
 Swiche drink as ther was in.
 Brengwain was wrong bi thought,
 To that drink sche gan win
 And swete Ysonde it bi taught³;
 Sche bad Tristrem bigin,
 To say.

³ gave.

Her loue might no man tvin⁴,
 Til her endingday.

⁴ part.

An hounde ther was beside,
 That was ycleped Hodain;
 The coupe he licked that tide
 Tho doun it sett Bringwain;
 Thai loued al in lide⁵
 And ther of were thai fain;
 To gider⁶ thai gun abide
 In ioie and ek in pain
 For thought:
 In iuel time, to sain⁷,
 The drink was y wrought.

⁵ in common.

⁶ Together.

⁷ to say, forsooth.

* Scott explained this line by a note: "The practice of putting gold and silver pins into drinking vessels was intended to regulate the draught of each guest." Hence perhaps the vulgar expressions, "drinking to a merry pin," and "taking one down a peg."

¹ Two weeks.

Tvai wikes¹ in the strand
 No seyl thai no drewe;
 Into Ingland
 A winde to wille hem blewe.
 The king on hunting thai fand;
 A knaue that he knewe,
 He made him knight with hand
 For his tidinges newe,
 Gan bring.
 Ysonde bright of hewe
 Ther spoused Mark the king.

[Brengwain on the nuptial night is substituted for the guilty queen. Presently the latter, fearing betrayal, orders two ruffians to dispatch her maid. The damsel, however, induces these to spare her, protesting that her only crime has been to lend the queen a clean smock on her bridal night. This being reported to the queen as Brengwain's last speech, Ysonde perceives the fidelity of her maid, laments her death, and vows vengeance on her murderers. Brengwain is then produced and restored to full favour.]

Mark surrenders his Queen.

² between, across.

Fram Irlond to the king
 An harpour com bi tven²;
 An harp he gan forth bring,
 Swiche no hadde thai neuer sen
 With sight;
 Himself, with outhen wen³,
 Bar it day and night.

³ without pause.

Ysonde he loved in are¹,
 He that the harp brought;
 About his hals² he it bare,
 Richelich it was wrought;
 He hidde it euer mare³,
 Out no com it nought.
 "Thine harp whi wiltow spare,
 Yif thou ther of can ough
 Of gle⁴?"
 "Out no cometh it nought
 With outen yiftes fre⁵."

¹ erst, formerly.² neck.³ evermore.⁴ music.⁵ noble gifts.

Mark seyde, "Lat me se
 Harpi hou thou can,
 And what thou askest me
 Yiue Y schal the than."
 "Blethely⁶," seyde he;
 A miri lay he bigan.
 "Sir king, of yiftes fre
 Her with Ysonde Y wan⁷
 Bidene⁸.
 Y proue the for fals man,
 Or Y schal haue thi quen."

⁶ Blithely.⁷ win.⁸ speedily.

Mark to conseyl yede⁹,
 And asked rede¹⁰ of tho to:
 "Lesen Y mote¹¹ mi manhed,
 Or yeld Ysonde me fro."
 Mark was ful of drede,
 Ysonde lete he go.

⁹ went.¹⁰ advice.¹¹ Lessen I must.

¹ extremity.

² slaying deer.

Tristrem in that nede¹
 At wode was, dere to slo²,
 That day;
 Tristrem com right tho
 As Ysonde was o way.

³ anger.

⁴ Givest thou
 gleemen.

⁵ a musical
 instrument,
 hand-organ.

⁶ without delay.

⁷ reached for.

Tho was Tristrem in ten³,
 And chidde with the king;
 "Yifstow glewemen⁴ thy quen?
 Hastow no nother thing?"
 His rote⁵, with outen wen⁶,
 He raught⁷ by the ring;
 Tho folwed Tristrem the ken
 To schip ther thai hir bring
 So blithe;
 Tristrem bigan to sing,
 And Ysonde bigan to lithe⁸.

⁸ listen.

⁹ soon sorrowful.

¹⁰ nigh broke in
 two.

¹¹ The earl.

Swiche song he gan sing
 That hir was swithe wo⁹;
 Her com swiche louelongoing,
 Hir hert brast neighe ato¹⁰.
 Therl¹¹ to hir gan spring
 With knightes mani mo,
 And seyde, "Mi swete thing,
 Whi farestow so,
 Y pray?"
 Ysonde to lond most go,
 Er sche went o way.

"Within a stounde¹ of the day
 Y schal ben hole and sounde;
 Y here amenstrel², to say,
 Of Tristrem he hath asoun³."
 Therl seyde, "Dathet him ay⁴
 Of Tristrem yif this stounde!
 That minstrel for his lay
 Schal have an hundred pounce
 Of me,
 Yif he wil with ous founde⁵,
 Lef,⁶ for thou louest his gle."

¹ short space.² a minstrel.³ a song.⁴ Ill-luck have
him always.⁵ go.⁶ Love, darling.

His gle al for to here
 The leuedi was sett on land
 To play bi the riure;
 Therl ladde hir bi hand;
 Tristrem, trewe fere⁷,
 Mirie notes he fand
 Opon his rote of yuere⁸,
 As thai were on the strand;
 That stounde
 Thurch that semly sand⁹
 Ysonde was hole and sounde.

⁷ friend.⁸ ivory.⁹ sound.

Hole sche was and sounde
 Thurch vertu of his gle;
 For thi therl that stounde
 Glad a man was he;
 Of penis to hundred pounce
 He yaf¹⁰ Tristrem the fre;

¹⁰ gave.

To schip than gun thai founde,
 In Yrlond wald thai be
¹ willingly. Ful fain',
 Therl and knightes thre
 With Ysonde and Bringwain.

Tristrem tok his stede
 And lepe ther on to ride;
² lead. The quen bad him her lede²
 To schip him bi side;
³ as she bade. Tristrem dede as hye bede³,
 In wode he gan hir hide.
 To therl he seyde, "In that nede
⁴ lost. Thou hast ytent⁴ thi pride,
 Thou dote!
 With thine harp thou wonne hir that tide,
 Thou tint hir with mi rote."

Meriadok's Discovery.

[After a week spent together in the forest Tristrem restores Ysonde to the king, telling him to give minstrels other gifts in future. The suspicions of one of Mark's courtiers, however, have been excited.]

Meriadok was aman
⁵ trusted always. That Tristrem trowed ay⁵;
 Miche gode he him an,
⁶ one. In o⁶ chaumber thai lay.
⁷ won. Tristrem to Ysonde wan⁷
 A night with hir to play;

As man that miche kan¹,
 A bord he tok oway
 Of her bour *;
 Er he went, to say,
 Of snowe was fallen aschour.

¹ can do much.

A schowr ther was y falle,
 That al the way was white;
 Tristrem was wo with alle,
 With diol, sorwe, and site².
 Bitven the bour and the halle
 The way was naru and lite³.
 Swiche cas him was bi falle,
 As we finde in scrite⁴.

² dule, sorrow,
 and anxiety. MS.
 "and sorwe site."

³ little.

⁴ writing.

Ful sket
 A siue⁵ he fond tite⁶,
 And bond vnder his fete.

⁵ sieve.

⁶ quickly.

Meriadok with his might
 Aros vp al bi dene⁷;
 The way he went right
 Til he com to the quen;
 The bord he fond of twight⁸,
 To wite, and nought at wene⁹.
 Of Tristrem kertel the knight
 He fond a pece grene
 Of tore;
 Meriadok the kene
 Wondred ther fore.

⁷ with speed.

⁸ twitched off.

⁹ To be perceived
 without doubt
 (plainly).

* Scott notes here the primitive domestic architecture. The queen's chamber was a wooden bower apart, "the art of partitions being probably unknown."

The Trial of Ysonde.

[Meriadok opens his suspicions to the king. The latter accordingly pretends a journey to the Holy Land, and asks Ysonde to whose charge she wishes to be committed. At first she names Tristrem, but presently, advised by Brengwain, she pretends a hatred to the knight, and the king is satisfied. Further interviews of the lovers are discovered by a dwarf, concealed in a tree. The king assumes the dwarf's place, but the lovers, discovering him by his shadow, pretend mutual recrimination, and Mark is again persuaded of their innocence. Finally, however, Meriadok invents a device. The king, the queen, and Tristrem have blood let the same day, and Meriadok strews the floor of Ysonde's chamber with flour. Tristrem coming at night, leaps thirty feet over the flour, but his vein bursting betrays his visit.]

Tristrem was fled oway,
 To wite, and nought to wene.
 At Londen on a day
 Mark wald spourge¹ the quen.
 Men seyð sche brak the lay²;
 A bischop yede³ bi tvene,
 With hot yren, to say,
 Sche thought to make hir clene
 Of sake⁴.
 Ysonde said bidene
 That dome sche wald take.

¹ test the purity
 of.

² law.

³ went.

⁴ blame.

⁵ marches.

⁶ in poor weed
 clad.

Men sett the merkes⁵ there
 At Westeminster ful right,
 Hot yren to bere
 For Sir Tristrem the knight.
 In pouer wede to were⁶
 Tristrem com that night

—Of alle the knightes here
 No knew him non bi sight
 Bidene—
 To swete Ysonde bright,
 As forward¹ was hem bitvene.

¹ tryst.

Ouer Temes she schuld ride,
 That is an arm of the se:
 “To the schip side,
 This man schal bere me.”
 Tristrem hir bar that tide,
 And on the quen fel he,
 Next her naked side
 That mani man might y se
 San schewe².

² without being shown.

* * * * *

In water thai wald him sink,
 And wers³, yif thai may.
 “Ye quite him iuel his swink⁴,”
 The quen seyde to hem ay;
 “It semeth mete no drink
 Hadde he not mani aday;
 For pouerte⁵, methenk,
 He fel, for sothe to say,
 And nede⁶:
 Yeueth⁷ him gold, Y pray,
 He may bidde god me spede.”

³ worse.⁴ Ye requite him
ill his toil.⁵ poverty.⁶ want.⁷ Give.

¹ consistory (a
bishop's court.)

² one.

³ saw well then.

⁴ Strangely nigh
he won.

⁵ A true thing
I say.

⁶ appointed.

⁷ before, forward.

⁸ then prayed
they.

⁹ But Mark
forgave.

¹⁰ In spite of
Meriadok his
(accusation).

Gold thai youen him thare :
The constori¹ thai bigan.
Swete Ysonde sware
Sche was giltles woman ;
" Bot on² to schip me bare,
The knightes seighe wele than³ ;
What so his wille ware,
Ferli neighe he wan⁴.
Sothe thing⁵,
So neighe com neuer man
Bot mi lord the king."

Swete Ysonde hath sworn
Hir clene, that miri may ;
To hir thai had y corn⁶
Hot yren, Y say.
The knightes were bi forn⁷ ;
For hir tho praiden thai⁸.
The yren sche hadde y born,
Ac Mark foryaue⁹ that day
And dede.
Meriadok held thai,
For fole in his falshede.

Ysonde is graunted clene,
Meriadok maugre his¹⁰ ;
Neuer er nas the quene
So wele with Mark, Y wis.
Tristrem, with outhen wene,
Into Wales he is ;

In bataile he hath ben,
 And fast he fraines¹ this
 Right thare :
 For he ne may Ysonde kisse
 Fight he sought ay whare.

¹ eagerly he
 seeks.

Ysonde of the White Hand.

[After famous exploits in Wales, where he relieves the kingdom from the tyranny of a giant, Urgan, Tristrem is invited back to court; but fresh amours with the queen appearing, Mark banishes the two together. They find a dwelling in the forest for a year, till the king, hunting one day, finds them asleep with a drawn sword lying between them. Persuaded of their innocence by this chance circumstance, and enamoured once more by the beauty of Ysonde, he stops with his glove a sunbeam falling through a cranny on her face, and presently recalls his wife and nephew to court. Again surprised by a dwarf, however, in a stolen interview with the queen, Tristrem is compelled to fly.]

Tristrem is went oway
 Withouten coming oyain,
 And siketh, for sothe to sain²,
 With sorwe and michel³ pain.
 Tristrem fareth ay
 As man that wald be slain,
 Bothe night and day,
 Fightes for to frain⁴,
 That fre ;
 Spaine he hath thurch sayn⁵,
 Geauntes he slough thre⁶.
 Into Bretein he ches⁷
 Bi come the doukes knight ;
 He set his lond in pes⁸,
 That arst⁹ was ful of fight.

² sighs, truth to
 say.

³ much.

⁴ seek.

⁵ seen.

⁶ Giants three he
 slew.

⁷ chose.

⁸ peace.

⁹ formerly.

Al that the doukes wes
 He wan oyain with right.
 He bede¹ him, with outen les²,
 His douhter that was bright
 In land.
 That maiden Ysonde hight
 With the White Hand.

¹ offered.
² "without lies,
i.e., in fact.

Tristremes loue was strong
 On swete Ysonde the quene;
 Of Ysonde he made a song,
 That song Ysonde bidene.
 The maiden wende³ al wrong
 Of hir it hadde y bene.
 Hir wening⁴ was so long,
 To hir fader hye gan mene⁵
 For nede.
 Ysonde with hand schene⁶
 Tristrem to wiue thai bede⁷.

³ weened,
 guessed.

⁴ desire.

⁵ make moan.

⁶ fair.

⁷ offered.

Tristrem a wil is inne,
 Has founden in his thought⁸:
 "Mark, mi nem, hath sinne,
 Wrong he hath wrought.
 Icham in sorwe and pine,
 Ther to hye hath me brought.
 Hir loue, Y say, is mine,
 The boke seyt it is nought⁹
 With right."
 The maiden more he sought
 For sche Ysonde hight¹⁰.

⁸ There is a wish
 in Tristrem
 which he has
 found in his
 thoughts.
 —*M^r Neill*.

⁹ The Bible saith
 it is not.

¹⁰ was called.

That in his hert he fand,
 And trewely thought he ay;
 The forward fast he band¹
 With Ysonde; that may
 With the white hand
 He spoused that day.
 O night, Ich vnder stand,
 To boure wenten thai
 On bedde.
 Tristrem ring fel oway
 As men to chaumber him ledde.

¹ The compact
fast he bound.

Tristrem bi held that ring,
 Tho was his hert ful wo:
 "Oyain me swiche athing
 Dede neuer Ysonde so;
 Mark, her lord, the king,
 With tresoun may hir to.
 Mine hert may no man bring
 For no thing hir fro,
 That fre.
 Ich have tvinned ous to²,
 The wrong is al in me."

² I have parted
us two.

Tristrem to bedde yede
 With hert ful of care.
 He seyde, "The dern dede³,
 Do it Y no dare;"
 The maiden he for bede⁴,
 Yif it hir wille ware.

³ The secret
deed.

⁴ demanded.

* forsooth, *lit.* in
word.

The maide answerd in lede¹,
 "Ther of haue thou no care.
 Al stille
 Y nil desiri na mare
 Bot at thine owen wille."

The Suit of Sir Canados.

[Presented with lands by the Duke Florentin of Brittany, Tristrem is attacked by Bellagog, a neighbouring giant. He cuts off the giant's foot and compels him to build a splendid hall containing in sculpture the whole history of Tristrem. Presently Ganhardin, brother of Ysonde of the White Hand, discovers Tristrem's neglect of his sister. He upbraids the hero, and for answer is shown the sculptured hall. Here he acknowledges the superior charms of the Cornish Ysonde, and becomes so enamoured of the presentment of Brengwain that Tristrem and he set out for England. Meanwhile Sir Canados, a new character, the constable of Mark, seeks to offer his addresses to the queen.]

² Because
Tristrem won.
³ thinketh.

⁴ ring.

⁵ saw.

Sir Canados was than
 Constable, the quen ful neighe;
 For Tristrem Ysonde wan²,
 So weneth³ he be ful sleighe
 To make hir his leman
 With broche and riche beighe⁴.
 For nought that he do can,
 Hir hert was euer heighe
 To hold;
 That man hye never seighe⁵
 That bifer Tristrem wold.

Tristrem made asong,
 That song¹ Ysonde the sleighe²
 And harped euer among.
 Sir Canados was neighe;
 He seyde, "Dame, thou hast wrong,
 For sothe who it seighe.
 As oule and stormes strong,
 So criestow on heye
 In herd³.
 Thou louest Tristrem dreighe⁴,
 To wrong thou art ylerd⁵.

¹ sung.
² cunning,
 skilful.

"Tristrem, for thi sake,
 For sothe wiued hath he.
 This wil the torn to wrake⁶;
 Of Breteyne douke schal he be.
 Other semblaunt⁷ thou make
 Thiseluen⁸, yif thou hir se;
 Thi love hir dede him take,
 For hye hight as do ye⁹
 In land.
 Ysonde men calleth that fre,
 With the white hand."

³ in public.

⁴ exceedingly.

⁵ Thou art
 wrongly in-
 formed.

⁶ turn to
 vengeance.

⁷ appearance.

⁸ Thyself.

⁹ she is called as
 are ye.

"Sir Canados, the waite¹⁰!
 Euer thou art mi fo.
 Febli thou canst hayte,
 There man schuld menske¹¹ do.
 Who wil lesinges layt¹²,
 Tharf him no ferther go.

¹⁰ guard thee.

¹¹ in manly
 fashion.

¹² treachery seek

¹ slander.Falsly canestow fayt¹² ever will be to
thee sorrow.That euer worth the wo².

For thi

³ A curse.Malisoun³ haue thou also
Of God and our Leuedy!

“A yift Ich yiue the:

⁴ Thy good
fortune mayst
thou lose.Thi thrift mot thou tine⁴!

That thou asked me,

No schal it neuer be thine.

Y hated al so thou be

Of alle that drink wine!

⁵ Hence quickly
flee.Hennes yern thou fle⁵

Out of sight mine

In lede.

Y pray to seyn Katerine

That iuel mot thou spede.”

The Queen's Tournament.

[Ysonde, disconsolate at the news of Tristrem, betakes herself with Brengwain to the forest. Here they are found by Tristrem returning with his friend. Tristrem and the queen are reconciled, and Brengwain is betrothed to Ganhardin. After spending two days together in the forest the party is nearly surprised by Canados. Coming with the whole force of the country he compels Tristrem and Ganhardin to fly, and carries Ysonde, bitterly upbraiding him, back to court. Tristrem remains in Cornwall, disguised as a beggar, with “cup and clapper.” Brengwain, disapproving his conduct, threatens to betray his interviews with Ysonde. Instead, however, she reveals to Mark the presumptuous love of Canados for the queen, and the constable is forthwith banished. Ysonde, fain for her lover, seeks to justify him to Brengwain, and, reduced to flatter her maid, begs her to bring him back. Nevertheless, upon Tristrem's next visit to the queen Brengwain proceeds to taunt him with his late flight.]

Tristrem in bour is blithe,
 With Ysonde playd he thare;
 Brengwain badde he lithe¹:

¹ bade him listen

“Who ther armes bare,
 Ganhardin and thou that sithe²
 Wightly oway gun fare³.”

² time.

³ Gallantly fled.

Quath Tristrem, “Crieth swithe⁴
 A turnament ful yare

⁴ Proclaim
 quickly.

With might:

Noither of ous nil spare
 Erl, baroun, no knight.”

A turnament thai lete crie;

The parti Canados tok he⁵;
 And Meriadok sikerly⁶,
 In his help gan he be.
 Tristrem ful hastilye,

⁵ Canados took
 the other side.

⁶ surely.

Of sent Ganhardin the fre⁷;
 Ganhardin com titly

⁷ Sent for the
 noble Gan-
 hardin.

That turnament to se

With sight;

Fro the turnament nold thai fle⁸
 Til her fon⁹ were feld doun right.

⁸ they would not
 flee.

⁹ their toes.

Thai com into the feld,

And founde ther knightes kene;
 Her old dedes thai yeld¹⁰

¹⁰ gave up.

With batayle al bi dene¹¹.

¹¹ speedily.

Tristrem gan bi held,
 To Meriadok bi tvene;

¹ wreaked his
wrath.

For the tales he teld,
On him he wrake his tene¹
That tide;
He yaf him awounde kene
Thurch out bothe side.

² pain.

Bitvene Canados and Ganhardin
The fight was ferly strong;
Tristrem thought it pin²

³ lose.

⁴ hurled.

⁵ lay there.

⁶ through helmet
pressed.

That it last so long;
His stirops he made him tine³,
To grounde he him wrong⁴.
Sir Canados ther gan lyn⁵,
The blod thurch brini throug⁶.
With care
On him he wrake his wrong,
That he no ros na mare.

⁷ Their foes
eagerly they
cast down.

⁸ The country
with them
joined.

⁹ took the high
keep.

Her fon fast thai feld⁷,
And mani of hem thai slough;
The cuntre with hem meld⁸,
Thai wrought hem wo ynough.
Tristrem hath hem teld
That him to schame drough.
Thai token the heighe held⁹,
And passed wele anough,
And bade.
Vnder wode bough
After her fomen thai rade.

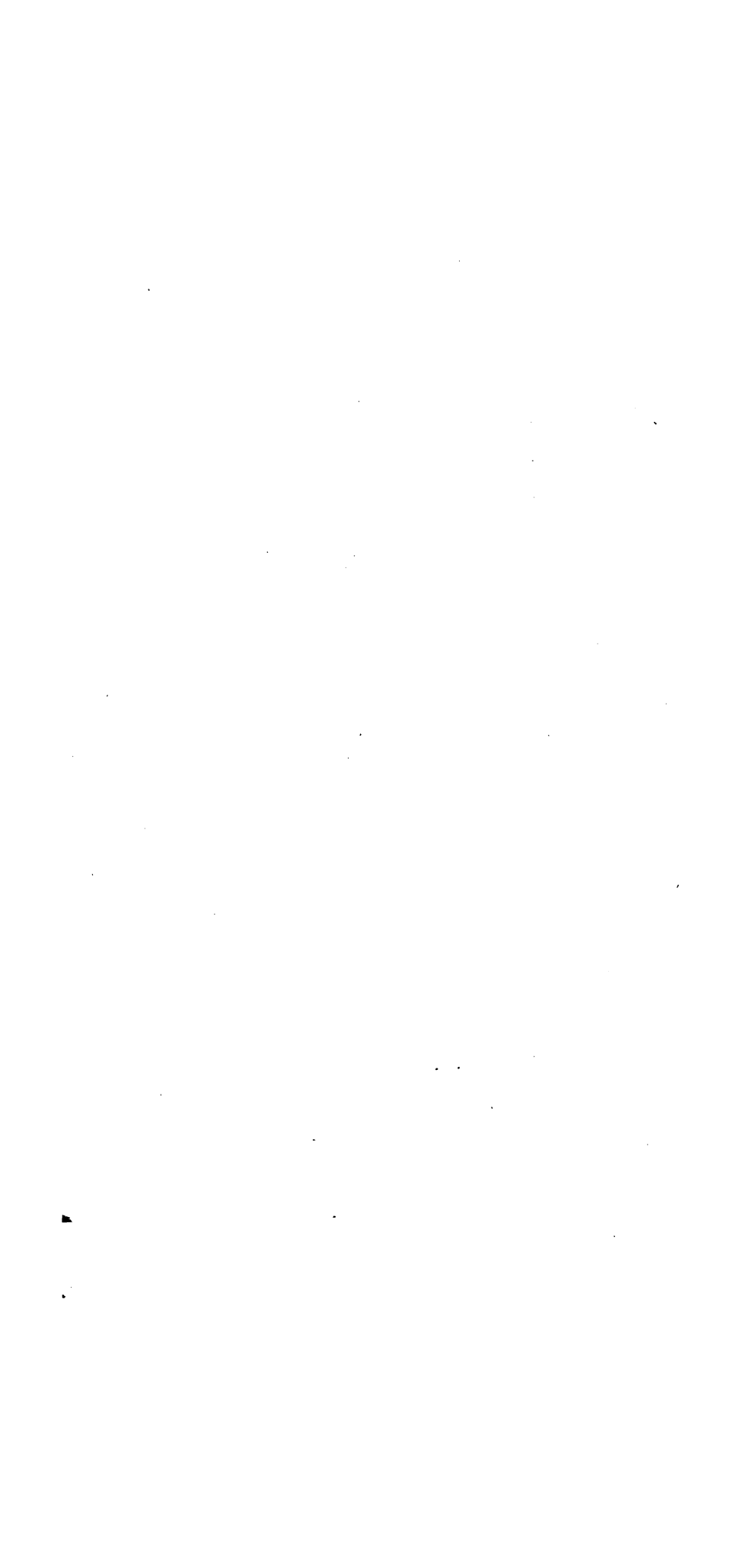
Conclusion.

[Tristrem and Ganhardin, their vengeance accomplished, retire to Brittany. There Tristrem undertakes the aid of a young knight bereft of his mistress. In the combat the young knight is slain. Tristrem avenges his death and slays the fifteen ravishers, but, fatal hap, receives an arrow in his old wound.

At this point the remainder of the romance in the Auchinleck MS. is torn away. Sir Walter Scott in his edition of the poem with curious art supplied a conclusion "in the stile of Thomas of Erceldoune" from two extant fragments of the French metrical version of the tale. This relates how Tristrem's gangrene became daily worse and could be cured by none but Ysonde of Cornwall. Ganhardin, bearing Tristrem's ring, is despatched for the queen, and instructed to hoist a white sail upon his return if accompanied by Ysonde, but a black sail if his embassy be unsuccessful. At last the vessel appears in sight flying a white sail. Ysonde of Brittany, knowing the signal and fired with jealousy, hastens to inform Tristrem. He conjures her to tell him the colour of the sail. She says it is black, whereupon, concluding himself forsaken by Ysonde, Tristrem sinks back in despair and dies. Ysonde of Cornwall lands, and hearing from an old man the death of her lover, rushes to the castle.

When Ysonde herd that
 Fast sche gan to gonne,
 At the castel gate
 Stop hir might none.
 Sche passed in there at,
 The chaumbre sche won.
 Tristrem in cloth of stat
 Lay stretched thar as ston
 So cold.
 Ysonde loked him on
 And faste gan bihold.

Fairer ladye ere
 Did Britannye never spyne,
 Swiche murning chere
 Making on heighe.
 On Tristreme's bere
 Down con sche lye;
 Rise ogayn did sche nere,
 Bot thare con sche dye
 For woe.
 Swiche lovers als thei
 Never schal be moe.]



JOHN BARBOUR.



JOHN BARBOUR.

HISTORIAN of the national hero as well as author of the national epic, John Barbour remains not only the first but the most famous of the poet-chroniclers of Scotland. But for his pen the passion of patriotism which gave Scotland a soul for four hundred years might have died with Douglas and Bruce, and but for him the living heroes of the Scottish wars of succession and independence might have come down to us little more than empty names.

Considering the fame of his work even in his own day, it seems strange that hardly anything is known of the facts of the poet's life. A few dates only have been discovered here and there, and imagination is left to clothe these with circumstance. His birth is set in Aberdeenshire in 1316, two years after the battle of Bannockburn, but the first certain knowledge of him does not occur till 1357. His appearance then is closely connected with the history of the time. Since the death of Alexander III. force of arms had been tried by the English kings for the subjugation of Scotland, and had failed. Now, however, according to Tytler, "Edward III. seemed to have fallen upon

a more fatal and successful mode of attack." After eleven years of captivity the Scottish king, David II., was held to ransom, and, among other attractions, there being then no such institutions in their own country, "the youth of Scotland were induced to frequent the universities of Oxford and Cambridge by the ready kindness with which the king gave them letters of protection." In 1357 Barbour, as Archdeacon of Aberdeen, was one of the commissioners appointed to arrange the treaty of ransom at Berwick, and in the same year and in 1364 he accompanied parties of young men to Oxford for the purposes of study. His passports upon these occasions are still extant, "teste Rege, apud Westmonasterium." There also exist permits dated 1365 and 1368 allowing him with a suite to pass through England to France upon scholarly research. Three times Barbour appears as one of the auditors of exchequer, and by a charter of 5th December, 1388, he received from Robert II. a pension of £10 in acknowledgment of his literary services. Previously, besides a gift of £10 and a Crown wardship, he had received a perpetual annuity of 20s. from his royal master. The annuity he made over to the chapter of Aberdeen for the saying of an annual mass for his soul, and regularly till the Reformation the mass was said in the cathedral there on the 13th of March. This, accordingly, has been presumed to be the day of Barbour's death. The year of his decease has been set at 1395, the last recorded payment of his larger pension occurring on 3rd April of that year.

Dr. Merry Ross, in his *Scottish History and Literature*, stated somewhat boldly that before the date of Barbour's work the great age of the chroniclers in England was already past. "Besides a solid array of historical names," he adds, "England can show a splendid list of poets, satirists, and critics, when empty silence reigns beyond the Tweed." To some extent, no doubt, this is true, though it was hardly an utter silence which produced *Sir Tristrem* and its following, the ballads of *Ercildoune*, *Auld Maitland*, and the like, and the other spirited popular poetry which found mention in Gavin Douglas's *Palice of Honour*, and is referred to by Barbour himself.

Young wemen when thai will play
Sing it amang them ilk day.

The comparative silence of the north, however, is accounted for by the absence of cohesive nationality. Without this the greatest inspiration of poetry was lacking. No sooner were the various races of Scotland united in a common sympathy by the wars of succession than the national spirit burst full-grown into vigorous poetic flower. In Barbour's *Bruce* appeared, fully developed, the *perfervidum ingenium Scotorum*—no crude fervour, but the earnest, high-hearted enthusiasm for things chivalrous and tender which has been the keynote of Scottish poetry ever since.

The Bruce was not its author's only work. Several passages in Wyntoun's *Cronykil* attest the existence of another :

This Nynus had a sone alsua,
Sere Dardane lord de Frygia,

Fra quham Barbere sutely
 Has made a propyr genealogy
 Tyl Robert oure secownd king
 That Scotland had in governyne.

Again :

Of Bruttus lyneage quha wyll her,
 He luk the tretis of Barbere
 Mad in-tyl a genealogy
 Rycht wele, and mare perfytylly
 Than I can on ony wys
 Wytht all my wyt to yowe dewys.

Barbour himself in *The Bruce*, speaking of the conquests of Arthur, says—

The Broite beris thairoff wytnes.

This poem, called by Wyntoun elsewhere *The Brut*, has now been completely lost, unless some two thousand lines said to exist in the MS. Troy-books by Lydgate at Cambridge be a part of it. The composition appears to have contained in metre an account of the descent of the Scottish kings from the Trojan Brutus, grandson of Æneas. A work of similar name and purpose was the *Brut* of Layamon in England, and the two are chiefly notable perhaps for showing the praiseworthy desire of all early chroniclers to begin at the beginning of things.

Still another work remains to be attributed to Barbour. Not many years ago Mr. Bradshaw discovered the *Book of Legends of the Saints*. The MS. of this, "a tall, narrow volume, closely written in unmistakably Scottish hand," is now in Cambridge University library, and a printed edition was given to the public in 1889.

But the fame of the Archdeacon of Aberdeen rests with neither of these. It is *The Bruce* which has kept his name shining through the centuries, and it is by *The Bruce* that he will be remembered while the English-speaking race has a heart to be touched and thrilled by generous emotion.

Barbour's poem naturally was neither the first nor the last upon so popular a subject. Patrick Gordon, Gentleman, about 1615 wrote in heroic verse *The Famous History of the Renown'd and Valiant Prince, Robert, Sirnamed the Bruce, King of Scotland*, and in his preface referred to a MS. poem previous to Barbour's. This was by Peter Fenton, a monk in the abbey of Melrose in 1369; but it was tattered and almost illegible when Gordon saw it, and nothing is known of it now.

Of the two manuscripts of Barbour's poem known to exist, one, penned by John Ramsay in 1489, lies now in the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh; the other, dated 1487, and probably by the same hand, as it is signed J. R., is in the archives of St. John's College, Cambridge. By the end of last century there had been made many printed editions "to answer the demand of the common people for this book, which, to the credit of their good sense," said Pinkerton, its editor of 1790, "is very great." Since then there have appeared Dr. Jamieson's edition of 1820, an edition for the Spalding Club by Mr. Cosmo Innes in 1856, and one for the Early English Text Society by the Rev. Mr. Skeat in 1870.

The historical value of *The Bruce* was early recog-

nised. Wyntoun and Boece both excused their brevity regarding the reign of King Robert by referring their readers to Barbour. It is partly owing, therefore, to the excellence of Barbour's masterpiece that no other contemporary account of the period which it records is extant upon the Scottish side. On the part of England, it is true, there exist chronicles like those of Lanercost and of William of Malmesbury. These, however, touch only externally upon matters in which the interests of the southern kingdom were concerned. The fact remains that for the inner atmosphere of Scottish life at the time, for the detail, character, and circumstance which give history its meaning, Barbour's *Bruce* is all but the only source of information. Nor has the general truth of his narrative ever been questioned. Upon every point but one upon which comparison can be made his statements accord with otherwise ascertained facts. He had every opportunity of acquiring information. The country was ringing from end to end with details of the great struggle; at court he was near the most trustworthy sources of knowledge, and in his youth at least there must have been about him many who had ridden by Randolph's side and who had heard the battle-bugles of the king. For the circumstances of Edward Bruce's raid in Galloway he quotes his actual informant by name :

A knycht, that then wes in his rowt,
Worthi and wycht, stalwart and stout,
Curtaiss, and fayr, and off gud fame,
Schyr Alane off Catkert by name,
Tauld me this taile, as I sall tell.

In one conspicuous instance only, as has been said, did Barbour depart from actual fact. With true instinct he perceived the one possible exception which might be taken to his hero's history—the fact that he, bred at Edward's court, had renounced his allegiance; and in order to display briefly the underlying right of Bruce's action he took the liberty of attributing to the grandson the wrong which had been done to the grandfather by the English king. It made a point of poetic justice that the noble who had suffered the wrong should be he who finally took redress at the hands of fortune: whereas it was the grandfather who suffered in Baliol's time and the grandson who triumphed at Bannockburn.

It was not, however, altogether as history that Barbour wrote *The Bruce*. Something of the ancient function of the bard was in his purpose. His intention was the exhibiting of a hero, the stirring of popular enthusiasm, as much as the recording of simple fact. His scheme was larger than mere detail of history. He painted the birth of a nation, and his work remains outstanding among national poems as conspicuously the epic of freedom. The sword had already done its part—Scotland stood erect; it was the poet's time to step forward, to show the true meaning of the struggle which was just over, and to pen its lesson upon the hearts of the people in letters of fire.

None who read *The Bruce* will aver that Barbour failed in what was demanded of him. The awakened soul of the nation was to be kept alive, and, for its

growth in strength and beauty, heroic and gentle ideals had to be kept before its eyes. These things Barbour accomplished. It is impossible to estimate the service to the civilization of his country silently effected by the praise of such gentle traits as that detailed in the passage beginning "The king has heard a woman cry." His work is a gallery of noble portraits, and when one has closed the book his characters remain alive in the mind, a strength and an inspiration. On the southern side Edward I., it is true, is painted all black, as he appeared to Scottish eyes at that time. But there is Sir Aymer de Valence, courteous and unembittered throughout in face of continued misfortune; and no one can read without a thrill the farewell of Sir Giles de Argentine to his flying king on the field of Bannockburn. There is Edward Bruce, hot-hearted and hot-headed, ever ready to charge against any odds with no more thought than

The ma thai be
The mar honour all out haff we.

There is Douglas, ever full of deft resource, expert in all arts alike of peace and war, the daring guerilla chief, gentlest squire of dames, but the terrible "Black Douglas" in the field. There is Randolph, the king's nephew, strict in honour as Bruce himself, mettled as became his princely blood, and wise beyond his age in governing. There are the gallant young Walter Stewart and the gentle old bishop, William Lamberton; the latter heroic through his love for Douglas. Last and greatest of all appears the hero-king himself, unmatched in courtesy to noble foes and friends.

terrible beyond telling to traitors, ever ready with the right word or parable to inspire his followers, his every act pregnant with the art of conduct. With rare skill Barbour has shown how the king's greatness made his followers great and inspired the whole heroism of his time, so that Sir Ingraham de Umphraville could justly be made to say of him

Ilk yowman is sa wicht
Of his that he is worth a knycht.

The poem should end, perhaps, after the battle of Bannockburn. The object of its action was then attained and its epic meaning complete. There is interior evidence, indeed, that it was originally meant to end here, the date and a general summing up being given. The remainder appears as a sequel, and, like all sequels, possesses diminished interest. The Irish wars of Edward Bruce and the Border exploits of Douglas, well told as they are, lag somewhat after the master-stroke by which the king set firm his throne. For some passages, however, the after part possesses a value of its own, among them being the unique story already referred to of the king's courtesy to women, and a valuable account of the warlike proceedings of that time in a long detailed description of the defence of Berwick.

Of the incidents of the poem, such as Bruce's encouragement of his knights with stories of romance during the tedious crossing of Loch Lomond, Mr. Cosmo Innes has said that "they give us a higher idea of chivalry than any writer of fable has reached." Pinkerton, the earlier editor, took occasion to say that

he preferred the life, spirit, and ease of Barbour, the plain sense, pictures of real manners, and perpetual incident and entertainment, to the melancholy sublimity of Dante and the amorous quaintness of Petrarch. And of the purely literary part Warton, the historian of English poetry, declared that "Barbour has adorned the English language by a strain of versification, expression, and poetical imagery far superior to his age." When the opportunity occurs, the historian of Bruce has shown that he can touch the details of natural description with a sure hand.

This wes in the moneth of May,
 Quhen byrdis syngis on ilka spray;
 Melland thair notis with seymly soun
 For softnes of the suet sesoun;
 And levys of the branchys spredis,
 And blomys brycht besid thaim bredis;
 And feldis are strowit with flouris
 Well sawarand, of ser colouris;
 And all thing worthis blith and gay,
 Quhen that this gude king tuk his way
 To rid southwart.

The poem is rich in shrewd observation of the springs of feeling. There is a quaint philosophy about lines like the following:

To tell off paynis passyt by
 Plesys to heryng petuisly,
 And to reherss thar auld dise
 Dois thaim oft-syss confort and ese.
 With thi thar-to folow na blame
 Dishonour, wikytnes, na schame.

A certain sort of aphorism, too, is constantly occurring:

For gud help is in gud begynnyng.
 For gud begynnyng and hardy,

Gyff it be folowit wittily,
May ger oftsyss unlikly thing
Cum to full conabill ending.

Barbour was a scholar, apt with classic allusion, and ready always to justify the action of his characters by a comparison with facts of Greek or Roman history—the resolution of Hannibal, the fate of Alexander or Cæsar, or the habits of Aristotle. Although not altogether free from the superstition of his time—inclined, for instance, to credit the presence of a fiend at the deathbed of Edward I.—he had doubts on such possibilities worthy of a later day.

In one respect at least *The Bruce* may be shown to possess an immense advantage over the great epics of Greece and Rome. The reader has immeasurably greater satisfaction in the success of its hero. In the Scottish poem there is no mean bribing of partizan gods, no unfair interference of a *deus ex machinâ*. All victory is fairly won, and is the natural reward of superior prudence, forethought, and courage. The difference in moral effect which this means may be seen at a glance.

John Barbour, as known by his work, possessed in a superlative degree the poet's heart for appreciating all nobleness; and his epic altogether, with the far-famed panegyric on Freedom which it contains, is hardly to be read yet without catching something of the glow, the high, brave-born enthusiasm of its heroic time.

IN the manuscripts of *The Bruce*, as in other ancient MSS., there is no punctuation. Besides this necessary addition, in the following pages hyphens have been introduced to connect words which now form compounds, such as *in-till* (into), *quhar-euir* (wherever), *euir-mar* (evermore). It is thought unnecessary to burden the margin with translations of familiar peculiarities of Scottish spelling like *guh* for *wh* (quhom for whom), *dd* for *th* (thiddayr for thither), *ch* for *gh* (rycht for right). Words and passages of the text enclosed in brackets are gaps supplied by Dr. Jamieson from the reading of early editions and otherwise. As in the case of *Sir Tristrem*, an effort is made by means of summaries between the selected passages to afford a view of the entire poem.

THE BRUCE.

STORYS to rede ar delitabill,
 Supposs¹ that thai be nocht bot fabill: ¹ Although.
 Than suld storyss that suthfast² wer, ² true.
 And thai war said on gud maner,
 Hawe doubill plesance in heryng.
 The fyrst plesance is the carpyng³ ³ narration.
 And the tothir the suthfastnes,
 That schawys the thing rycht as it wes.
 And such thyngis that are likand⁴ ⁴ agreeable.
 Tyll mannys heryng⁵ ar plesand. ⁵ To man's hearing.
 Tharfor I wald fayne set my will,
 Giff my wyt mycht suffice thartill,
 To put in wryt a suthfast story,
 That it lest ay furth in memory,
 Swa that na tyme of lenth it let⁶, ⁶ So that no length of time obstruct it.
 Na ger it haly be foryet⁷. ⁷ Nor cause it wholly be forgot.
 For auld storys that men redys
 Representis to thaim the dedys
 Of stalwart folk that lywynt ar⁸, ⁸ lived of yore.
 Rycht as thai than in presence war.
 And certes, thai suld weill hawe pryss⁹ ⁹ have praise.
 That in thair tyme war wycht and wiss¹⁰, ¹⁰ strong and wise.

1 stress.

2 void of cowardice.

3 praise and goodness.

And led thair lyff in gret trawaill,
 And oft, in hard stour¹ off bataill,
 Wan rycht gret price off chewalry,
 And war woydyt off cowardy²;
 As wes king Robert off Scotland,
 That hardy wes off hart and hand;
 And gud Schyr James off Douglas,
 That in his tyme sa worthy was,
 That off hys price and his bounté³
 In fer landis renownyt wes he.
 Off thaim I thynk this buk to ma.
 Now God gyff grace that I may swa
 Tret it and bryng it till endyng
 That I say nocht bot suthfast thing!

Scotland under Oppression.

[Upon the death of Alexander III. the barons of Scotland, disagreeing upon the competing claims of Baliol and of Bruce to the throne, invite Edward I. of England to act as arbitrator. To turn the dissension to his own advantage Edward offers the crown to the competitor who will do him sovereign homage. Bruce refuses. Baliol accepts, is made king, but presently on a slight pretext is degraded.]

4 in this wise.

5 forfeited.

6 in haste.

Quhen Schyr Edward, the mychty king,
 Had on this wyss⁴ done his, likyng
 Off Jhone the Ballioll, that swa sone
 Was all defawtyt⁵ and wndone,
 To Scotland went he than in hy⁶,
 And all the land gan occupy
 Sa hale that bath castell and toune
 War in-till his possessioun,

[Fra Weik anent¹ Orkenay]
 To Mullyr snwk² in Gallaway,
 And stuffyt³ all with Ingliss men.
 Schyrreffys and bailyheys maid he then,
 And alkyn⁴ othir officeris
 That for to gowern land afferis⁵
 He maid off Inglis nation;
 That worthy than sa rych fellone⁶,
 And sa wykkyt and cowatouss,
 And swa hawtane and dispitouss⁷,
 That Scottis men mycht do na thing
 That euir mycht pleyss to thar liking.
 Thar wyffis wald thai oft forly⁸,
 And thar dochtrys⁹ disputisly:
 And gyff ony of thaim thair-at war wrath,
 Thai watyt¹⁰ hym wele with gret scaith¹¹;
 For thai suld fynd sone enchesone¹²
 To put hym to destructione.
 And gyff that ony man thaim by
 Had ony thing that wes worthy,
 As horss or hund or othir thing
 That war plesand to thar liking,
 With ryght or wrang it have wald thai.
 And gyf ony wald thaim withsay¹³,
 Thai suld swa do, that thai suld tyne¹⁴
 Othir land or lyff, or leyff in pyne.
 For thai dempt¹⁵ thaim eftir thair will,
 Takand na kep to ryght na skill¹⁶.
 A! quhat thai dempt them felonly¹⁷!
 For gud knychtis that war worthy,
 For litill enchesoune or than nane

¹ From Wick opposite.

² point.

³ furnished.

⁴ all kinds of.

⁵ pertains.

⁶ Who became then so extremely rich.

⁷ haughty and despitful.

⁸ lie with.

⁹ daughters.

¹⁰ plundered.

¹¹ hurt.

¹² reason.

¹³ gainsay.

¹⁴ lose.

¹⁵ doomed.

¹⁶ Taking no heed of right or reason.

¹⁷ cruelly.

Thai hangyt be the nekbane.
 Als that folk that euir wes fre
 And in fredome wount for to be,
 Throw thar gret myschance and foly
 War tretyt than sa wykkytly
 That thair fays thair jugis war.
 Quhat wrechitnes may man have mar?

A! fredome is a noble thing!

* pleasure.

Fredome mayss man to haiff liking¹.
 Fredome all solace to man giffis.
 He levys at ess that frely levys!

² Is yearned for
above.

A noble hart may haiff nane ess,
 Na ellys nocht that may him pless,
 Gyff fredome failyhe: for fre liking
 Is yharnyt our² all othir thing.

³ peculiar state.

⁴ grief.

⁵ coupled with
foul thraldom.

⁶ by heart he
should knowit.

⁷ praise, prize.

Na he that ay hass levyt fre
 May nocht know weill the propyrté³,
 The angyr⁴, na the wrechyt dome,
 That is cowplyt to foule thyrdome⁵.
 Bot gyff he had assayit it,
 Than all perquer he suld it wyt⁶;
 And suld think fredome mar to pryss⁷
 Than all the gold in warld that is.

⁸ Revealers of
the other are.

Thus contrar thingis euir-mar
 Discoweryngis off the tothir ar⁸.
 And he that thryll is has nocht his;
 All that he hass embandownyt is
 Till hys lord, quhat-euir he be.

⁹ not so much
free.

Yheyt has he nocht sa mekill fre⁹
 As fre wyll to leyve or do

That at hys hart hym drawis to.
 Than mayss clerkis questioun,
 Quhen thai fall in disputacioun,
 That gyff man bad his thryll owcht do,
 And in the samyn tym come him to
 His wyff, and askyt hym hyr det¹,
 Quhethir he his lordis neid suld bet²,
 And pay fryst that he awcht³, and syne⁴
 Do furth his lordis commandyne;
 Or leve onpayit his wyff, and do
 Thai thingis that commandyt is him to?
 I leve all the solucioun
 Till thaim that ar off mar renoun.
 Bot sen thai mak sic comperying⁵
 Betwix the dettis off wedding⁶
 And lordis bidding till his threll;
 Ye may weile se, thought nane yow tell,
 How hard a thing that threldome is.
 For men may weile se, that ar wyss,
 That wedding is the hardest band
 That ony man may tak on hand:
 And thryldome is weill wer than deid⁷;
 For quhill a thryll his lyff may leid
 It merrys him, body and banys⁸;
 And dede anoyis him bot anys⁹.
 Schortly to say, is nane can tell
 The halle¹⁰ conditioun off a threll.

¹ duty.² abate.³ owes.⁴ afterwards.⁵ comparison.⁶ duties of marriage.⁷ much worse than death.⁸ mars him, body and bones.⁹ death troubles but once.¹⁰ whole.

James of Douglas.

[Among sufferers is William of Douglas. He is seized by Edward and slain in prison, and his lands are given to Lord Clifford. Fleeing from the country, his son, young James of Douglas, lives in Paris for nearly three years. Returning then to see whether he cannot do something to regain his heritage, he lands at St. Andrews, where he is warmly received by the bishop. His open heart wins him many friends.]

¹ loyal.

He wes in all his dedis lele¹;

² deigned.

For him dedeynyet² nocht to dele

³ falsehood.

With trechery na with falset³.

His hart on hey honour wes set,

⁴ demeaned in
such fashion.

And hym contenyt on sic maner⁴

That all him luffyt that war him ner.

Bot he wes nocht so fayr that we

Suld spek gretly off his beauté.

⁵ somewhat.

In wysage wes he sumdeill⁵ gray,

And had blak har, as Ic hard say.

Bot off lymmys he wes weill maid,

With banys gret, and schuldrys braid.

His body wes weyll [maid and lenye;]

As thai that saw hym said to me.

Quhen he wes blyth he wes luffy,

And meyk and sweyt in cumpany:

Bot quha in battaill mycht him se

All othir contenance had he.

⁶ lisped.

And in spek wlispyt⁶ he sum-deill;

Bot that sat him rycht wondre weill.

Till gud Ector of Troy mycht he

In mony thingis likynt be.

Ector had blak har as he had,

And stark lymmys¹, and rycht weill maid,
 And wlyspit alsua as did he,
 And wes fulfillt of leawté²,
 And wes curtaiss and wyss and wycht.
 Bot off manheid and mekill mycht
 Till Ector dar I nane comper,
 Off all that euir in worldys wer.
 The quethyr in his tyme sa wrocht he
 That he suld gretly lovyt be.

¹ strong limbs.² complete in
loyalty.

He duellyt thar quhill on a tid
 The king Eduuard, with mekill prid,
 Come to Strevillyne with gret mengye³
 For till hald thar ane assemblé.
 Thiddirwart went mony baroune;
 Byschop Wylame off Lambyrtoun
 Raid thiddyr als, and with him was
 This squyer James of Dowglas.
 The byschop led him to the king,
 And said, "Schyr, heyr I to yow bryng
 This child that clemys⁴ your man to be,
 And prayis you per cheryté
 That ye resave her his homage
 And grantis him his herytage."
 'Quhat landis clemys he?' said the king.
 "Schyr, giff that it be your liking,
 He clemys the lordschip off Douglas;
 For lord tharoff hys fadyr was."
 The king then wrethyt him encrely⁵,
 And said, 'Schyr byschop, sekryly
 Gyff thow wald kep thi fewté⁶

³ following.⁴ claims.⁵ was wroth in-
wardly (*en
crely*).⁶ fealty.

- Thow maid nane sic speking to me.
 Hys fadyr ay wes my fay feloun¹,
 And deyt tharfor in my presoun,
 And wes agayne my maiesté;
 Tharfor hys ayr I aucht to be.
 Ga purches land quhar-euir he may;
 For tharoff haffys he nane perfay².
 The Clyffurd sall thaim haiff, for he
 Ay lely has serwyt to me.³
 The byschop hard him swa ansuer,
 And durst³ than spek till him na mar;
 Bot fra his presence went in hy,
 For he dred sayr his felouny⁴:
 Swa that he na mar spak thairto.
 The king did that he com to do,
 And went till Ingland syn agayn,
 With mony man off mekill mayn⁵.
- ¹ fierce foe.
- ² thereof has he none i' faith (*par foi*).
- ³ dared.
- ⁴ dreaded sore his cruelty.
- ⁵ much strength.

Bruce Defeated.

[Riding from Stirling one day Sir John Cumyn proposes to assist Bruce in a rising. Bruce consents, but the compact is betrayed by Cumyn. Bruce is summoned to London, and, unwitting of treachery, narrowly escapes arrest. He posts north to Lochmaben, raises his vassals, stabs Cumyn at the high altar at Dumfries, and takes the field. He is joined by the young Douglas and crowned at Scone, but is surprised and, in spite of prodigies of personal valour, defeated first at Methven, and afterwards, while wandering with the queen and her ladies among the hills, by John of Lorn at Dalry.]

The king that nycht his wachis set,
 And gert ordayne that thai mycht et;
 And bad conford to thaim tak,
 And at thar mychtis mery mak.

"For disconford," as then said he,
 "Is the werst thing that may be.
 For throw mekill disconforting
 Men fallis off in-to dispanyng,
 And fra a man dispanyt be,
 Then trewly wtterly wencusyt¹ is he,
 And fra the hart be discumfyt,
 The body is nocht worth a myt².
 Tharfor," he said, "atour³ all thing,
 Kepys yow fra dispanyng,
 And thynk thouch we now harmys fele,
 That God may yeit releve ws weill.
 Men redys off mony men that war
 Fer hardar stad⁴ then we yhet ar,
 And syne our lord sic grace thaim lent
 That thai come weill till thair entent.

¹ vanquished.² mite.³ above.⁴ harder beset.

For Rome quhilum sa hard wes stad
 Quhen Hanniball thaim wencusyt had,

Ye may weill be ensampill se
 That na man suld dispanyt be,
 Na lat his hart be wencusyt all
 For na myscheiff that euir may fall.
 For nane wate⁵ in how litill space
 That God wmqhile⁶ will send grace.
 Had thai* fled and thar wayis gane
 Thar fayis swith⁷ the toune had tane.
 Tharfor men that werrayand war⁸

⁵ know.⁶ sometimes.⁷ quickly.⁸ carry on war.

*The people of Rome.

- ¹ aim. Suld set thair etlyng¹ euir-mar
 To stand agayne thair fayis mycht,
 Wmquhile with strenth and quhile with slycht,
 And ay thynk to cum to purpos;
² choice. And giff that thaim war set in choss²
 To dey or to leyff cowardly,
³ rather. Thai suld erar³ dey chewalrusly."
- ⁴ In this fashion. Thusgat⁴ thaim confort the king,
 And to confort thaim gan inbryng
 Auld storys off men that wer
⁵ in several hard Set in-tyll hard assayis ser⁵,
 trials.
⁶ thwarted. And that fortoun contrarivit⁶ fast,
 And come to purpos at the last.

The Parting with the Queen.

- He prechyt thaim on this maner,
⁷ feigned. And fenyeit⁷ to mak better cher
 Then he had matir to, be fer:
⁸ went from ill to For his causs yeid fra ill to wer⁸.
 worse.
 Thai war ay in sa hard trawaill,
 Till the ladyis began to fayle,
⁹ suffer. That mycht the trawaill drey⁹ na mar.
 Sa did othir als that thar war.
 The erle Jhone wes ane off tha,
 Off Athole, that quhen he saw sua
 The king be discumfyt twyss,

And sa feile¹ folk agayne him ryss,
 And lyff in sic trawail and dout,
 His hart begane to faile all out.
 And to the king apon a day
 He said, "Gyff I durst to yow say,
 We lyff in to sa mekill dreid,
 And haffis oft-syss² off met sic ned,
 And is ay in sic trawailling,
 With cauld and hungir and waking,
 That I am sad off my-selwyn³ sua
 That I count nocht my liff a stra.
 Thir angrys⁴ may I ne mar drey,
 For thocht me tharfor worthit dey.
 I mon sojourne, quhar-euir it be.
 Leuys me⁵ tharfor per cheryté."
 The king saw that he sa wes failyt,
 And that he ik wes for trawailyt⁶.
 He said, "Schyr erle, we sall sone se
 And ordayne how it best may be.
 Quhar-euyr ye be, our Lord yow send
 Grace fra your fais yow to defend!"
 With that in hy to him callyt he
 Thaim that till him war mast priué:
 Then amang thaim thai thocht it best,
 And ordanyt for the liklyest,
 That the queyne and the erle alsua
 And the ladyis in hy⁷ suld ga
 With Nele the Bruce till Kildromy.
 For thaim thocht thai mycht sekyrly⁸
 Duell thar quhill thai war wictaillit weile.
 For swa stalwart wes the castell

¹ many.² often.³ myself.⁴ These griefs.⁵ Give me leave.⁶ also was sore
fatigued.⁷ in haste.⁸ securely.

That it with strenth war hard to get
 Quhill that thar-in wer men and mete.
 As thai ordanyt thai did in hy:
 The queyne and all hyr cumpany
 Lap¹ on thair horss and furth thai far.
 Men mycht haiff sene, quha had bene thar,
 At leve-takyng the ladyis gret²
 And mak thar face with teris wet,
 And knychtis for thar luffis sak
 Bath sich and wep and murnyng mak.
 Thai kyssyt thair luffis at thair partyng.
 The king wmbethocht him off a thing;
 That he fra thine on fute wald ga,
 And tak on fute bath weill and wa,
 And wald na horss-men with him haiff.
 Tharfor his horss all haile³ he gaiff
 To the ladyis that mystir⁴ had.
 The queyn furth on hyr wayis rade,
 And sawfly come to the castell,
 Quhar hyr folk war ressawyt weill
 And esyt weill with meyt and drynk.
 Bot mycht nane eyss let⁵ hyr to think
 On the king that wes sa sar stad
 That bot twa hundre with him had.
 The quhethir thaim weill confortyt he ay:
 God help him, that all mychtis may!

¹ Leaped.

² weep.

³ all whole, every one.

⁴ necessity.

⁵ no ease might prevent.

The King a Fugitive.

[Bruce with his two hundred men wanders for a time among the mountains, but, winter coming on, he determines to retreat to Kintyre. He sends Sir Neil Campbell in advance to procure provision.]

The king, eftir that he wes gane, To Lowchlomond the way has tane ¹ And come thar on the thrid day. Bot thar-about na bait fand thai ² That mycht thaim our the water ber. Than war thai wa ³ on gret maner, For it wes fer about to ga, And thai war in to dout alsua To meyt thair fayis that spred war wyd. Tharfor endlang ⁴ the louchhis syd Sa besyly thai socht and fast, Tyll Jamys of Dowglas at the last Fand a litill sonkyn bate And to the land it drew fut hate ⁵ . Bot it sa litill wes that it Mycht our the watter bot thresum flyt ⁶ . Thai send tharoff word to the king, That wes joyfull off that fynding; And fyrst in-to the bate is gane, With him Dowglas. The thrid wes ane That rowyt thaim our deliuerly ⁷ And set thaim on the land all dry, And rowyt sa oft-syss to and fra, Fechand ay our twa and twa, That in a nycht and in a day	<p>¹ taken.</p> <p>² no boat found they.</p> <p>³ woful.</p> <p>⁴ along.</p> <p>⁵ straightway (hot-foot).</p> <p>⁶ transport but three together.</p> <p>⁷ nimbly.</p>
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Cummyn owt-our the louch ar thai.
 For sum off thaim couth swome full weill
 And on his bak ber a fardele¹.
 Swa with swymmyng and with rowyng
 Thai brocht thaim our, and all thair thing.

¹ a burden.

The king, the quhilis, meryly
 Red to thaim that war him by
 Romanys off worthi Ferambrace,*
 That worthily our-cummyn² was
 Throw the rycht douchty Olywer;
 And how the Duk Peris³ wer
 Assegyt⁴ in-till Egrymor.

² overcome.

³ the Twelve
 Peers of France
 (Douze Pairs).

⁴ besieged.

The Death of Edward I.

[Bruce betakes himself to winter at the Isle of Rachryn. The queen and her daughter, leaving shelter, are made prisoners at the Girth of Tain, and Kildromy itself, after a gallant defence by Neil Bruce, is betrayed and reduced by the English.]

Bot quhen the king Eduuard hard say
 How Neill the Bruce held Kildromy
 Agayne his sone sa stalwartly,
 He gaderyt gret chewalry
 And towart Scotland went in hy.

And as in-till Northummyrland
 He wes with his gret rowt ridand,
 A seknes tuk him in the way,

**Sir Fierabras*, one of the romances concerning Charlemagne and his twelve peers. It was edited from the Ashmole MS. by Mr. Sidney J. Herrtage for the Early English Text Society in 1879.

And put him to sa hard assay
 That he mycht nocht ga na ryd.
 Him worthit, magre his¹, abid
 In-till an hamillet thar-by,
 A litill toun and wnworthy.
 With gret payne thiddir thai him broucht;
 He wes sa stad that he ne mocht
 Hys aynd bot² with gret paynys draw,
 Na spek bot giff it war weill³ law.
 The quhethir he bad thai suld him say
 Quhat toun wes that, that he in lay.
 "Schyr," thai said, "Burch in the Sand
 Men callis this toun, in-till this land."
 'Call thai it Burch? Alas!' said he,
 'My hop is now fordone⁴ to me.
 For I wend neur to thoile⁵ the payne
 Off deid till I, throw mekill mayn,
 The Burch off Jerusalem had tane.
 My lyff wend I thar suld be gayne⁶.
 In Burch I wyst weill I suld de,
 Bot I was nothir wyss na sle⁷
 Till othyr Burch kep to ta⁸.
 'Now may I na-wiss forthyr ga.'
 Thus pleynyeit⁹ he off his foly,
 As he had mater sekyrly¹⁰
 Quhen he cowyt¹¹ certanté
 Off that at nane may certain be.

¹ It behoved him,
despite his
(desire).

² His own boot.
³ actually.

⁴ quite worn out.

⁵ weened never
to suffer.

⁶ finished.

⁷ cunning.

⁸ to take excep-
tion.

⁹ complained.

¹⁰ surely.

¹¹ coveted.

[Edward, it appears, had consulted a certain fiend as to the date and place of his death, and the familiar, after the manner of his kind, had deceived his patron with an equivocal answer.]

At Jerusalem trowyt¹² he
 Grawyn¹³ in the Burch to be;

¹² trusted.

¹³ Interred.

- The quethyr at Burch in-to the Sand
 He swelt¹ rycht in his awn land.
 And quhen he to the dede wes ner,
 The folk, that at Kyldromy wer,
 Come with prisoneris that thai had tane,
 And syne to the king ar gane.
 And for to confort him thai tauld
 How thai the castell to thaim yauld²;
 And how thai till his will war broucht,
 To do off that quhat-euir he thought;
 And askyt quhat men suld off thaim do.
 Then lukyt he angryrly thaim to,
 And said grynndand, "Hyngis and drawys³."
 That wes wondir of sic sawis⁴,
 That he, that to the dede was ner,
 Suld ansuer apon sic maner,
 For-owtyn menyng⁵ and mercy;
 How mycht he traist on hym to cry,
 That suthfastly demys⁶ all thing,
 To haiff mercy for his cryng,
 Off him that, throw his felony,
 In-to sic poynt⁷ had na mercy?
 His men his maundment has done,
 And he deyt thareftir sone,
 And syne wes broucht till berynes⁸.
 His sone syne king eftir wes.
- ¹ died.
- ² yielded.
- ³ Hang and draw.
- ⁴ such a saying.
- ⁵ Without compassion.
- ⁶ truly judges.
- ⁷ In such state of body.
- ⁸ burial.

The Return of the King.

[Douglas, irking at idleness and pitying the burdened islanders, leaves Rachryn, makes a descent upon Arran, succeeds in cutting off a convoy of supplies, and all but takes the castle of Brodick. Ten days later Bruce sets sail.]

With thretty small galayis and thre
 The king arywy¹ in Arane,
 And syne² to the land is gane
 And in a toune tuk his herbery³,
 And speryt⁴ syne speceally
 Gyff ony man couth tell tithand⁵
 Off ony strang men in that land.
 "Yhis," said a woman, "Schyr, perfay,
 Off strang men I kan yow say,
 That ar cummyn in this countré,
 And schort quhile syne, throw thair bounté,
 Thai haff discomfyt our wardane,
 And mony off his men has slane.
 And till a stalwart place herby
 Reparis all thair cumpany."
 'Dame,' said the king, 'wald thow we wiss⁶
 To that place quhar thair repair⁷ is,
 I sall reward the but lesing⁸;
 For thai ar all off my duelling,
 And I rycht blythly wald them se,
 And swa trow I that thai wald me.'
 "Yhis," said scho, "Schyr, I will blythly
 Ga with yow and your cumpany,
 Till that I schaw yow thair repair."
 'That is inewch⁹, my systir fayr ;

¹ arrived.² presently.³ took quarters in
in a hamlet.⁴ inquired.⁵ tidings.⁶ direct us.⁷ gathering.⁸ without fraud,
indeed.⁹ enough.

¹ without more
delay.

² showed a place.

‘Now ga we forthwart,’ said the king.
Than went thai furth but mar letting¹,
Folowand her as scho thaim led,
Till at the last scho schawyt a sted²
To the king in a wode glen,
And said, “Schyr, her I saw the men
That yhe sper eftir mak logyng;
Her I trow be thair reparyng.”

³ caused.

⁴ as soon as the
last (blast
sounded).

⁵ long time since.

⁶ without doubt.

The king then blew his horn in hy,
And gert³ the men that wer him by
Hald thaim still and all priwé;
And syne agayn his horn blew he.
James of Dowglas herd him blaw,
And at the last alsone⁴ gan know,
And said, “Sothly yon is the king:
I know lang quhill syne⁵ his blawyng.”
The thrid tym thar with all he blew,
And then Schyr Robert Boid it knew,
And said, “Yone is the king but dreid⁶;
Ga we furth till him bettir speid.”
Than went thai till the king in hy,
And him inclynyt curtasly.
And blythly welcummyt thaim the king,
And wes joyfull of thair meting,
And kissit thaim, and speryt syne
How thai had farne⁷ in thair huntyn.
And thai him tauld all but lesing:
Syne lowyt⁸ thai God off thair meting.
Syne with the king till his herbery
Went bath joyfull and joly.

⁷ fared.

⁸ praised.

The Landing in Carrick.

[A council of war is held, and a descent upon the opposite mainland determined. Cuthbert, a scout, is sent over to Carrick with orders if landing appears feasible to light a fire on Turnberry Head. On the appointed day the fire is seen. As the king prepares to leave the beach a woman beckons him apart and in a spirited harangue prophesies his approaching triumph. He then sets sail.]

This wes in ver¹, quhen wyntir-tid,
 With his blastis hidwyss to bid²,
 Was our-drywyn³, and byrdis smale,
 As turturis and the nychtyngale,
 Begouth rycht sariely⁴ to syng,
 And for to mak in thair singyng
 Swete notis, and sownys ser⁵,
 And melodys plesand to her;
 And the treis begouth to ma
 Burgeans⁶, and brycht blomys alsua,
 To wyn the helyng off thair hewid⁷
 That wykkyt wyntir had thaim rewid⁸;
 And all gressys beguth to spryng.
 In-to that tyme the nobill king,
 With his flote and a few mengye,
 Thre hundyr I trow thai mycht be,
 Is to the se, owte off Arane,
 A litill forouth ewyn gane⁹.

¹ spring.

² hideous to
abide.

³ over-driven.

⁴ Began right
artfully.

⁵ sounds many.

⁶ Buds.

⁷ To get the
covering of
their head.

⁸ reft.

⁹ gone forth in
even array.

Thai rowit fast with all thair mycht
 Till that apoun thaim fell the nycht,
 That woux myrk¹⁰ apoun gret maner,
 Swa that thai wyst nocht quhar thai wer.

¹⁰ waxed dark.

- For thai na nedill had, na stane,
 Bot rowt alwayis in-till ane¹,
 Sterand all tyme apon the fyr
 That thai saw brynnand lycht and schyr².
 It wes bot auentur³ thaim led,
 And thai in schort tyme sa thaim sped
 That at the fyr arywyt thai,
 And went to land but mar delay.
 And Cuthbert, that has sene the fyr,
 Was full off angry⁴ and off ire:
 For he durst nocht do it away,
 And wes alsua dowtand ay
 That his lord suld pass to se.
 Tharfor thair cummyn waytit he,
 And met thaim at thair arywing.
 He wes wele sone broucht to the king,
 That speryt at hym how he had done.
 And he with sar hart tauld him sone
 How that he fand nane weill luffand⁵,
 Bot all war fayis that he fand:
 And that the lord the Persy,
 With ner thre hundre in cumpany,
 Was in the castell thar besid,
 Fullfillyt⁶ off dispyt and prid;
 Bot ma than twa partis off his rowt
 War herberyt in the toune⁷ without:
 "And dyspytyt yow mar, Schir king,
 Than men may dispyt ony thing."
 Than said the king, in full gret ire,
 'Tratour, quhy maid thow than the fyr?'
 "A! Schyr," said he, "sa God me se!
- ¹ in one body.
- ² clear.
- ³ adventure.
- ⁴ grief.
- ⁵ well-disposed.
- ⁶ "choke-full."
- ⁷ quartered in the
standing.

The fyr wes newyr maid for me.
 Na, or¹ the nycht, I wyst it nocht;
 Bot fra² I wyst it, weill I thocht
 That ye and haly your menye
 In hy suld put yow to the se.
 For-thi³ I cum to mete yow her,
 To tell perellys that may aper."

¹ ere.² from the time
when.³ therefore.

The king wes off his spek angry,
 And askyt his prywé men, in hy,
 Quhat at thaim thought wes best to do.
 Schyr Edward fryst answert thar-to,
 Hys brodyr that wes swa hardy,
 And said, "I say yow sekyrly
 Thar sall na perell that may be
 Dryve me eftsonys⁴ to the se.
 Myne auentur her tak will I,
 Quhethir it be esfull or angry."
 'Brothyr,' he said, 'sen thou will sua,
 It is gud that we saymn ta⁵
 Dissese or ese, or payne or play,
 Eftyr as God will ws purway.
 And sen men sayis that the Persy
 Myn heretage will occupy,*
 And his menye sa ner ws lyis,
 That ws dispytis mony wyss,
 Ga we and wenge sum off the dispyte;
 And that may we haiff done alss tite⁶,
 For thai ly traistly, but dreding⁷

⁴ presently.⁵ together take.⁶ also soon.⁷ trustfully, with-
out fear.

* Bruce inherited Carrick through his mother, whose first husband had been earl of that district.

Off ws or off our her cummyng.
 And thought we slepand slew thaim all,
 Repruff tharoff na man sall.
 For werrayour na forss¹ suld ma,
 Quhethir he mycht ourcum his fa
 Throw strenth or throw sutelté,
 Bot that gud faith ay haldyn be.'

¹ warrior no
 scruple.

The Defence at the Ford.

[Percy abandons Turnberry. A lady of the country, cousin to Bruce, joins the king with forty followers and informs him of the fall of Kildromy and the taking of the queen. Douglas, obtaining permission, departs alone for Douglasdale, declares himself to his people, and surprising his enemies at kirk on Palm Sunday, puts them to the sword. His slaughter of prisoners among the meal and wine on the castle floor is called "The Douglas Larder." Meanwhile the king, attacked by traitors in a covert, excites his followers' admiration by his single-handed defence.

Presently the men of Galloway, seeing him with but few retainers, come upon him suddenly, two hundred strong.]

Thai schup thaim in an ewynnyng²
 To suppriss³ sodanly the king;
 And till him held thai straucht thair way.
 Bot he, that had his wachis ay
 On ilk⁴ sid, off thair cummyng,
 Lang or thai come, had wyttering⁵,
 And how fele⁶ that thai mycht be.
 Tharfor he thought, with his menye,
 To withdraw him out off the place,
 For the nycht weill fallyn was.
 And for the nycht he thought at⁷ thai

² prepared on an
 evening.

³ suppress.

⁴ every.

⁵ information.

⁶ many.

⁷ that.

Suld nocht haiff sycht to hald the way
 That he war passyt with his menye.
 And as he thought rycht swa did he,
 And went him doun till a morrass,
 Our a wattyr that rynnand was;
 And in the bog he fand a place
 Weill strait, that weill twa bow-drawcht¹ was ^{1 quite two bow-}
 Fra the wattyr thai passit haid. ^{shots.}
 He said, "Her may ye mak abaid,
 And rest yow all a quhile and ly.
 I will ga wach all priuely
 Giff, Ik her oucht off thair cummyng:
 And giff I may her ony thing,
 I sall ger warn you, sa that we
 Sall ay at our awantage be."

The king now takys his gate² to ga, ^{2 takes his way.}
 And with him tuk he sergeandis twa³; ^{3 two squires.}
 And Schyr Gilbert de la Hay left he
 Thar, for to rest with his menye.
 To the wattyr he come in hy,
 And lysnyt full ententily
 Giff he herd oucht off thair cummyng;
 Bot yeit mocht he her na thing.
 Endlang the wattyr than yeid he⁴ ^{4 Along the stream then went he.}
 On athyr syd a gret quantité,
 And saw the brayis⁵ hey standand, ^{5 hillsides.}
 The wattyr holl throw slik rynnand⁶;
 And fand na furd that men mycht pass,
 Bot quhar him-selwyn⁷ passit was. ^{6 The deep water running through slime.}
 And swa strait wes the wpcummyng ^{7 himself.}

¹ thrust together.

That twa men mycht nocht samyn thring¹,
Na on na maner press thaim swa
That thai to-gidder mycht lang ga.

² A hound's bay-
ing far off.

And quhen he a lang quhile had bene thar
He herknyt, and herd as it war

³ betokening.

A hundis questionyng on fer²,
That ay come till him ner and ner.
He stude still, for till herkyn mar,
And ay the langer he wes thar
He herd it ner and ner cummand.
Bot he thocht he thar still wald stand,
Tyll that he heard mar takynnyng³,
Than, for ane hundis questionyng,
He wald nocht wakyn his menye.
Tharfor he wald abid, and se
Quhat folk thai war, and quethir thai
Held towart him the rycht way,
Or passyt ane othyr way fer by.
The moyne wes schynand clerly.
Sa lang he stude, that he mycht her
The noyis off thaim that cummand wer.
Than his twa men in hy⁴ send he
To warne and walkyn his menye⁵;
And thai ar furth thair wayis gane,
And he left thar all hym allane.
And swa stude he herknand,
Till that he saw cum at his hand
The hale rout, in-till full gret hy.
Then he wmbethought him hastily
Giff he held towart his menye

⁴ in haste.

⁵ waken his fol-
lowing.

That, or he mycht reparyt be¹,
 Thai suld be passit the furd ilkan².
 And then behuffyt him chess ane
 Off thir twa, othyr to fley or dey.
 Bot his hart that wes stout and hey
 Consaillyt hym hym allane to bid,
 And kepe thaim at the furde syd,
 And defend weill the wpcummyng;
 Sen he was warnyst of armyng³
 That he thar arowys thurch nocht dreid.
 And gyff he war off gret manheid
 He mycht stunay thaim euirilkane⁴,
 Sen thai ne mycht cum bot ane and ane.
 He did rycht as hys hart hym bad.
 Strang wtrageouss curage he had,
 Quhen he sa stoutly him allane,
 For litill strenth off erd⁵, has tane
 To fecht with twa hundre and ma.
 Thar-with he to the furd gan ga,
 And thai, apon the tothyr party,
 That saw him stand thar anyrly⁶,
 Thringand⁷ in-till the wattyr rad.
 For off him litill dout thai had,
 And raid till him in full gret hy.
 He smate the fyrst swa wygorusly
 With his sper, that rycht scharp schar⁸,
 Till he doun till the erd him bar.
 The lave⁹ come then in-till a randoun¹⁰;
 Bot his horss, that wes born doun,
 Combryt thaim the wpgang to ta¹¹.
 And quhen the king saw it was swa,
 H

¹ ere he might
 join his men.
² each one.

³ furnished with
 armour.

⁴ dismay them
 every one.

⁵ ground.

⁶ alone.

⁷ Thronging.

⁸ cut.

⁹ remainder.
¹⁰ torrent.

¹¹ Cumbered
 them in the
 ascent.

¹ stabbed.

He stekyt¹ the horss, and he gan flyng,
 And syne fell at the wpcummyng.
 The layff with that come with a schout;
 And he, that stalwart wes and stout,
 Met thaim rycht stoutly at the bra,
 And sa gud payment gan thaim ma,
 That fyvesum in the furd he slew.
 The lave then sumdele thaim withdrew,
 That dred his strakys wondre sar,
 For he in nothing thaim forbar.

² fights.

³ Whoeverknew.

⁴ all whole.

⁵ without doubt.

⁶ So many.

⁷ closed up.

Then said ane, "Certes, we ar to blame.
 Quhat sall we say quhen we cum hame,
 Quhen a man fechtis² agane ws all?
 Quha wyst euir³ men sa foully fall
 As ws, gyff that we thusgat leve?"
 With that all haile⁴ a schout thai geve,
 And cryit, "On him! he may nocht last."
 With that thai pressyt hym sa fast
 That had he nocht the better bene
 He had bene dede with-owtyn wen⁵.
 Bot he sa gret defence gan mak
 That quhar he hyt ewyn a strak
 Thar mycht na thing agane [him] stand.
 In litill space he left liand
 Sa fele⁶ that the wpcummyng wes then
 Dyttyt⁷ with slayn horss and men;
 Swa that his fayis, for that stopping,
 Mycht nocht cum to the wpcummyng.

A! der God! quha had then bene by,
 And sene how he sa hardyly
 Addressyt hym agane thaim all,
 I wate weile that thai suld him call
 The best that levyt in his day.
 And giff I the suth sall say,
 I herd neuir in na tym gane
 Ane stynt¹ sa mony him allane.

¹ stop.

On this manner, that Ik haiff tauld,
 The king, that stout wes and bauld,
 Wes fechtand on the furd syd,
 Giffand and takand rowtis roid²,
 Till he sic martyrdom thar has maid
 That he the ford all stoppyt haid,
 That nane off thaim mycht till him rid.
 Thaim thocht than foly for to byd,
 And halely the flycht gan ta,
 And went hamwartis³ quhar thai come fra.
 For the kingis men with the cry
 Walknyt full effrayitly⁴,
 And com to sek thair lord the king.
 The Gallowaymen hard thar cummyng,
 And fled, and durst abid no mar.
 The kingis men, that dredand war
 For thair lord, full spedily
 Come to the furd; and sone in hy
 Thai fand the king syttand allane,
 That off hys bassynet⁵ has tane

² rude blows.³ homewards.⁴ Wakened
affrightedly.⁵ helmet.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~
 ~ ~ ~ ~ ~
 ~ ~ ~ ~ ~
 ~ ~ ~ ~ ~
 ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

¹ air.

Till awent¹ him, for he wes hate.
 Than speryt thai at him off his state,
 And he tauld thaim all hale the cass,
 Howgate that he assailyt was,
 And how that God him helpyt swa
 That he eschapyt hale thaim fra.
 Than lukyt thai how fele war ded;
 And thai fand lyand in that sted
 Fourtene, that war slayne with his hand.
 Than lovyt² thai God fast³, all weildand⁴,
 That thai thair lord fand hale and fer;
 And said thaim byrd⁵ on na maner
 Drede thair fayis, sen thair chyftane
 Wes off sic hart and off sic mayn
 That he for thaim had wndretan
 With swa fele for to fecht ane⁶.

² praised.³ hastily.⁴ all in a host.⁵ behoved.⁶ single.

Syk wordis spak thai of the king,
 And for his hey wndretaking
 Farlyit⁷, and yarnyt hym for to se,
 That with him ay wes wont to be.
 A! quhat worschip is perfyt thing⁸!
 For it mayss men till haiff loving⁹,
 Giff it be folowit ythenly¹⁰.
 For pryce off worschip nocht-forthi¹¹
 Is hard to wyn. For gret trawail,
 Oft to defend and oft assaill,
 And to be in thair dedis wyss,
 Gerris men off worschip wyn the pryce.

⁷ wondered.⁸ what honour is
a perfect deed.⁹ praise.¹⁰ consistently.¹¹ notwithstanding.

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The Goodwife of Carrick.

[The English warden, Sir Aymer de Valence, determined on a decisive blow, approaches with a great force. The king attacks him, but finds himself in turn attacked behind by John of Lorn with eight hundred men. Seeing the odds hopeless, he divides his following into three parties to distract pursuit. Again and again this device is resorted to, but John of Lorn, with a bloodhound, continually pursues the king's company. At last Bruce, left alone with his foster-brother, slays with his own hand four of five pursuers who overtake him. Then, losing heart, he declares he will go no further. But the foster-brother rallies him, and presently he remembers a device. Wading a bowshot down a running stream they throw the hound off the scent and escape. In this fight, it is said, Thomas Randolph on the English side won great honour by capturing Bruce's banner. The king and his man the same night are attacked when asleep by three assassins. The foster-brother is slain, but Bruce avenges his death on the three traitors. Afterwards he sets forth towards his tryst.]

The king went furth way and angry¹,
 Menand² his man full tendirly;
 And held his way, all him allane,
 And rycht towart the houss is gan
 Quhar he set tryst to meit his men.
 It wes weill inwith³ nycht be then.
 He come sone in the houss, and fand
 The howsswyff on the benk⁴ sittand;
 That askit him quhat he was,
 And quhen⁵ he come, and quhar he gas.
 "A trawailand man, dame," said he,
 "That trawailys her throw the contré."
 Scho said, 'All that trawailand er,
 For ane his sak, ar welcum her.'
 The king said, "Gud dame, quhat is he
 That gerris yow haiff sic specialté⁶
 To men that trawailis?" 'Schyr, perfay,'

¹ woful and
 grieved.
² lamenting.

³ towards.

⁴ bench.

⁵ whence.

⁶ peculiar regard.

Quoth the gud wyff, 'I sall yow say.
 The king, Robert the Bruyss, is he,
 That is rycht lord off this countré.
 His fayis now haldis him in thrang¹;
 Bot I think to se or ocht lang²
 Him lord and king our all the land,
 That na fayis sall him withstand.'
 "Dame, luffis thow him sa weil?" said he.
 'Ya Schyr,' said scho, 'so God me se!'
 "Dame," sayd he, "[lo] hym her the by;
 For Ik am he, I say the soithly³;
 Yha certes, dame." 'And quhar are gane
 Your men, quhen ye ar thus allane?'
 "At this time, dame, Ik haiff no ma⁴."
 Scho said; 'It may na-wyss be swa.
 Ik haiff twa sonnys, wucht and hardy;
 Thai sall becum your men in hy.'
 As scho diuisyt⁵ thai haiff done;
 His sworne men become thai sone.
 The wyff syn gert him syt and ete;
 Bot he has schort quhile at the mete
 Syttyn, quhen he hard gret stamping
 About the howss. Then, but letting,
 Thai stert wp the howss for to defende.
 That sone eftre the king has kend
 James off Dowglas. Than wes he blyth,
 And bad oppyn the durris swyth⁶.
 And thai cum in, all that thar war.
 Schyr Eduuard the Bruce wes thar,
 And James alsua of Dowglas,
 That wes eschapyt fra the chace

¹ struggle.² ere any length
of time.³ truly.⁴ more.⁵ devised.⁶ quickly.

And with the kingis brothyr met.
 Syn to the tryst that thaim wes set
 Thai sped thaim with thair cumpany,
 That war ane hundir and weile fyfty.

Edward Bruce in Galloway.

[Successful in several minor engagements and in repulsing another private attack upon his life, the king determines to essay greater things. A detachment of a thousand men under Sir Philip Mowbray, coming from Bothwell to surprise him, are waylaid by Douglas near Kilmarnock and put to rout. Bruce then accepts a challenge from De Valence to join battle under Loudon Hill. Beforehand he takes care to manipulate the field so that the forces will meet on something like equal footing, and the result is the final overthrow of the English warden. Setting out forthwith to meet the hostile lords in the north, the king falls seriously ill. He is carried from place to place in a litter, and his friends begin to lose heart, till one day, his forces being attacked at Old Meldrum by Sir David of Brechin, he calls for his horse and armour, and routs at once his sickness and his enemies. Forfar Castle is taken and demolished, and Perth, after a six weeks' siege, falls before the king's attack in person. Meanwhile in the south Douglas has again by stratagem taken and destroyed his own castle, and Edward Bruce has set forth to free Galloway. After routing a large force by the Water of Cree he does not hesitate with only fifty men to fall upon fifteen hundred.]

Throw his chewalrouss chewalry
 Galloway wes stonayit gretumly¹,
 And he dowtyt for his bounté².
 Sum off the men off the countré
 Come till his pess, and maid him aith.
 Bot Schyr Amery, that had the skaith³
 Off the bargane⁴ I tauld off er,
 Raid till Ingland till purches ther
 Off armyt men gret cumpany,
 To weng him off the welany⁵

¹ greatly dismayed.

² feared for his worth.

³ hurt.

⁴ fight.

⁵ avenge the disgrace.

That Schyr Eduuard, that noble knycht,
 Him did by Cre in-to the fycht.
 Off gud men he assemblit thar
 Weill fyftene hundyr men and mar
 That war off rycht gud renowmé.
 His way with all that folk tuk he,
 And in the land all priuely
 Entryt with that chewalry,
 Thynkand Schyr Eduuard to suppryss,
 Giff that he mowcht on ony wiss.
 For he thought he wald him assaile,
 Or that he left, in playn bataill.
 Now may ye her off gret ferly¹
 And off rycht hey chewalry.
 For Schyr Eduuard in-to the land
 Wes, with his mengné, rycht ner hand,
 And in the mornyng rycht arly
 Herd the countré men mak cry,
 And had wyttryng off thair cummyng.
 Than buskyt he him, but delaying,
 And lapp on horss delyuerly².
 He had than in route fyfty,
 All apon gud horss armyt weill.
 His small folk gert he ilkdeill³
 Withdraw thaim till a strait tharby,
 And he raid furth with his fyfty.

¹ wonder.² nimbly.³ caused he each one.⁴ Valorous.⁵ proper.

A knycht that then wes in his rowt,
 Worthi⁴ and wycht, stalwart and stout,
 Curtaiss and fayr⁵ and off gud fame,

Schyr Alane off Catkert by name,
 Tauld me this taile, as I sall tell.
 Gret myst in-to the mornying fell,
 Sa thai mycht nocht se thaim by,
 For myst, a bowdraucht fullely.
 Sa hapnyt it that thai fand the traiss,
 Quhar-at the rowte furth passyt waiss
 Off thair fayis, that forowth raid¹.
 Schyr Eduuard, that gret yarnyn had
 All tymys to do chewalry,
 With all his rout in full gret hy
 Folowyt the traiss quhar gane war thai,
 And befor midmorne off the day
 The myst wox cler all sodanly.
 And than he and his cumpany
 War nocht a bowdrawcht fra the rout.
 Than schot thai on thaim with a schout.
 For gyff thai fled thai wyst that thai
 Suld nocht weill feyrd² part get away.
 Tharfor in awentur to dey
 He wald him put or³ he wald fley.
 And quhen the Inglis cumpany
 Saw on thaim cum sa sodanly
 Sik folk, for-owtyn abaysyng⁴,
 Thai war stonayt for effraying⁵.
 And the tothyr, but mar abaيد⁶,
 Swa hardely amang thaim raid
 That fele off thaim till erd thai bar.
 Stonayit sa gretly than thai war
 Throw the force off that fyrst assay
 That thai war in-till gret effray;

¹ rode before.² fourth.³ ere.⁴ Such folk without abashment.⁵ terror.⁶ without more delay.

- ¹ supposed. And wend¹ befor thai had bene ma,
For that thai war assailit swa.
- ² ridden through. Quhen thai had thyrlyt² thaim hastily
Than Schyr Eduuardis cumpany
- ³ Charged head-
long. Set stoutly in the heid³ agayne.
And at that courss borne doune and slayn
War off thair fayis a gret party,
That thai effrayit war sa gretly
- ⁴ dispersed. That thai war scalyt⁴ gretly then.
And quhen Schyr Eduuard and his men
Saw thaim in-till sa ewill aray
- ⁵ spurred. The thrid tyme on thaim prekyt⁵ thai.
And thai that saw thaim sa stoutly
Come on, dred thaim sa gretumly
That all thar rowt, bath less and mar,
- ⁶ scattered. Fled prekand, scalyt⁶ her and thar.
Wes nane amang thaim sa hardy
To bid ; bot all comonaly
- ⁷ shelter. Fled to warand⁷; and he gan chass
That wilfull to destroy thaim was.
And sum he tuk, and sum war slayn ;
Bot Schyr Amery with mekill payn
- ⁸ went his way. Eschapyt, and his gat is gayn⁸.
His men discumfyt war ilkane ;
Sum tane, sum slayne, sum gat away.
- ⁹ right proper
point of war
indeed. It wes a rycht fayr poynt perfay⁹.

Thomas Randolph.

[Douglas coming one night to a house on the Water of Lynn listens and hears someone inside say, "The devil!" Judging his enemies to be within he surrounds the house, and after a fierce fight secures several notable prisoners, among others Bruce's nephew, Randolph, and his own cousin, Alexander Stewart.]

That nycht the gud lord off Dowglas
 Maid to Schyr Alysander, that was
 His emyss¹ sone, rycht gladsome cher.
 Swa did he als, with-owtyn wer²,
 Till Thomas Randell; for that he
 Wes to the king in ner degre
 Off blud, for his sistre him bar.
 And on the morne, for-owtyn mar³,
 Towart the noble king he raid,
 And with him bath thai twa he haid.
 The king off his present was blyth,
 And thankyt him weill fele syth⁴.
 And till hys nevo gan he say
 "Thou has ane quhill renyid thi fay⁵,
 Bot thou reconsalit now mon be."
 Then till the king ansueryt he,
 And said, 'Ye chasty⁶ me; bot ye
 Aucht better chastyt for to be.
 For sene ye werrayit⁷ the king
 Off Ingland, in playne fechtin⁸
 Ye suld press to derenyhe⁹ [your] rycht,
 And nocht with cowardy na with slycht.'
 The king said, "Yeit fall it may
 Cum, or oucht lang¹⁰, to sic assay.

¹ uncle's.² without restriction, *lit.* guard.³ without more (ado).⁴ very many times.⁵ forsworn thy allegiance.⁶ reprove.⁷ made war on.⁸ in open fight.⁹ determine by battle.¹⁰ ere long.

Bot sen thow spekys sa rudly,
 It is gret skyl¹ men chasty
 Thai proud wordis till that thow knaw
 The rycht, and bow it as thow aw².
 The king, for-owtyn mar delaying,
 Send him to be in ferme keping
 Quhar that he allane suld be
 Nocht all apon his powsté³ fre.

And quhen a litill time wes went,
 Eftre Thomas Randell he sent;
 And sa weile with him tretit he,
 That he his man hecht⁴ for to be.
 And the king his ire him forgave:
 And for to hey⁵ his state him gave
 Murreff, and erle tharoff him maid,
 And othyr sundry landis braid
 He gave him in-till heretage.
 He knew his worthi wasselage⁶
 And his gret wit and his awyss⁷,
 His traist hart, and his lele seruice.
 Tharfor in him affyit he⁸,
 And ryche maid him off land and fe,
 As it wes certis rycht worthi.
 For, and men spek off him trewly,
 He wes swa curageous ane knycht,
 Sa wyss, sa worthy, and sa wycht,
 And off sa souerane gret bounté⁹,
 That mekill¹⁰ off him may spokyn be.
 And for I think off him to rede¹¹,

¹ reason.² bend to it as thou ought.³ effort.⁴ engaged.⁵ heighten.⁶ valorous achievement.⁷ his sagacity and his prudence.⁸ he put faith.⁹ goodness.¹⁰ much.¹¹ discourse.

And to schaw part off his gud dede,
 I will discryve now his fassoun¹
 And part off his condicioun.
 He wes off mesurabill statur²,
 And weile porturat at mesur³,
 With braid wesage, plesand and fayr,
 Curtaiss at poynt, and debonayr,
 And off rycht sekyr contenyng⁴.
 Lawté he lowyt atour⁵ all thing;
 Falset, tresoun, and felony,
 He stud agayne ay encrely⁶.
 He heyit⁷ honour ay, and larges⁸,
 And ay mantemyt⁹ rychtwysnes.
 In cumpany solacious¹⁰
 He was, and tharwith amorous.
 And gud knychtis he luffyt ay.
 And, giff I the suth sall say,
 He wes fulfillit off bounté,
 Als off wertuous all maid was he.
 I will commend him her no mar:
 Bot ye sall her weile forthymar
 That he for his dedis worthy
 Suld weile be prysyt souerandly¹¹.

¹ describe the fashion of him.² middle stature.³ showed his height well.⁴ firm demeanour.⁵ Truth he esteemed above.⁶ in his heart.⁷ exalted.⁸ liberty.⁹ possessed.¹⁰ cheerful.¹¹ sovereignly.

Quhen the king thus was with him saucht¹², ¹² softened.
 And gret lordschippis had him betaucht¹³, ¹³ bestowed.
 He woux sa wyse and sa awysé
 That his land fyrst weill stablyst he,
 And syne he sped him to the wer,
 Till help his eyne in his myster¹⁴.

¹⁴ need.

The Battle of Bannockburn.

[Meanwhile the king has routed the forces of John of Lorn under Ben Cruachan, and has taken Dunstaffnage. William Bunnock, a doughty farmer, concealing men under his supplies of hay, has surprised Linlithgow peel. Douglas on St. Fastern's Eve, approaching upon hands and knees in the dusk, has his men mistaken for a herd of wandering cattle, and succeeds in scaling the walls of Roxburgh. And Randolph, after a hopeless siege, gains access to Edinburgh Castle by a perilous lover's path, and wins it for the king. Edward Bruce, having overcome all Galloway and Nithsdale and reduced Rutherglen and Dundee, lays siege to Stirling. The place is impregnable, but at last, provisions running low, the governor offers to make a treaty to deliver the castle provided it be not relieved by midsummer. Edward Bruce agrees. The king at the intelligence blames his brother's rashness in allowing so long a grace to so powerful an enemy, but nevertheless makes the best preparation he can. At the same time Edward II. of England, seeing here an opportunity of conquering the whole of the north at one blow, summons all his resources. A hundred thousand men assemble on the east border. Here Edward joins them, and they are arrayed under renowned leaders.]

¹ thus-wise.

Quhen the king apoun this kyn wyss¹

Had ordanyt, as Ik her diuiss,

² governing.

His bataillis and his stering²,

He raiss arly in a mornynge,

And fra Berwik he tuk the way.

³ covered.

Bath hillis and walis helyt³ thai,

As the bataillis that war braid

⁴ Rode disposed
over the fields.

Departyt our the feldis raid⁴.

The sone wes brycht and schynand cler,

And armouris that burnyst wer

Swa blomyt with the sonnys beme

⁵ blaze.

That all the land wes in a leme⁵.

⁶ displayed.

Baneris rycht fayrly flawmand⁶

⁷ streamers
waving.

And penselys to the wynd wawand⁷

Swa fele thar war of ser quentiss¹
 That it war gret slycht² to diuise.
 And suld I tell all thar affer³,
 Thar contenance, and thar maner,
 Thought I couth I suld combryt be.
 The king, with all that gret menye,
 Till Edinburgh he raid him rycht.
 Thai war all out to fele⁴ to fycht
 With few folk of a symple land.
 Bot quhar God helpys quhat ma withstand?

¹ fair design.² skill.³ equipment.⁴ too many.

The king Robert, quhen he hard say
 That Inglis men in sic aray
 And in-to sua gret quantité
 Come in his land, in hy gert he
 His men be somound generaly.
 And thai come all, full wilfully,
 To the Torwood, quhar that the king
 Had ordanyt to mak thair meting.

[Edward Bruce, Stewart, Douglas, and Randolph join the king, and the Scottish forces number over thirty thousand. Bruce arranges them in four "battles." On Saturday he hears that the English are in Edinburgh. Accordingly he leads his army to the New Park before Stirling, and to equalize the conflict, honeycombs the ground on his left with foot-pits against cavalry. At sunrise on Sunday the Scots hear mass, and that day keep fast for the Vigil of St. John. Bruce bids all who are faint-hearted leave the field, but all answer with a cry of resolution. That night the English lie at Falkirk, and Murray is set to keep succours out of Stirling. Next day the English appear, covering hill and plain with shining mail and waving banners. They detach eight hundred horse under Clifford to relieve Stirling by making a circuit. The king pointing this out to Murray declares that "a rose of his chaplet is fallen." The latter, stung and mortified, dashes against the succours with five hundred men, and after a terrible conflict puts them to rout. Meanwhile the main body of the English approaches.]

And quhen the king wist that thai wer,
 In hale bataill, cummand sa ner,
 His bataill gert he weill array.
 He raid apon a litill palfray,
 Laucht¹, and joly arayand
 His bataill, with an ax in hand.
 And on his bassynet he bar
 An hat of tyre aboune ay quhar²,
 And thar-wpon, in-to taknyng³,
 Ane hey croune, that he wes king.

¹ clad (in mail).

² a tiara hat
 above every-
 thing.

³ in token.

And quhen Glosyster and Herfurd war
 With thair bataill approachand ner,
 Befor thaim all thar come rydand,
 With helm on heid and sper in hand,
 Schyr Henry the Boune, the worthi,
 That wes a wycht knycht, and a hardy,
 And to the erle off Herfurd cusyne,
 Armyt in armys gud and fyne,
 Come on a sted a bow-schote ner,
 Befor all othyr that thar wer;
 And knew the king, for that he saw
 Him swa rang his men on raw⁴,
 And by the croune that wes set
 Alsua apon his bassynet.
 And towart him he went in hy⁵.
 And [quhen] the king sua apertly⁶
 Saw him cum forouth all his feris⁷,
 In hy till him the hors he steris⁸.
 And quhen Schyr Henry saw the king
 Cum on, for-owtyn abaysing,

⁴ range in row.

⁵ haste.

⁶ boldly.

⁷ before his com-
 rades.

⁸ steers.

Till him he raid in full gret hy.
 He thought that he suld weill lychtly¹
 Wyn² him and haf him at his will,
 Sen he him horsyt saw sa ill.
 Sprent thai samyn in-till a ling³.
 Schyr Henry myssit the noble king;
 And he, that in his sterapys stud,
 With the ax that wes hard and gud
 With sa gret mayne⁴ raucht him a dynt⁴
 That nothyr hat na helm mycht stynt⁵
 The hewy dusche⁶ that he him gave,
 That ner the heid till the harnys⁷ clave.
 The hand ax schaft fruscht in twa⁸,
 And he doune to the erd gan ga
 All flatlynys, for him faillyt mycht.
 This wes the fyrst strak off the fycht.

¹ very easily.² reach.³ They sped together in a line.⁴ With so great strength reached him a blow.⁵ stop.⁶ heavy crash.⁷ brain.⁸ shivered in two.

[As night falls Bruce addresses his troops, orders their conduct on the morrow, and declares their enemies already morally discomfited. Next morning he makes knights and arrays his battle.]

And quhen the king off Ingland
 Swa the Scottis saw tak on hand,
 Takand the hard feyld sa opynly,
 And apon fute, he had ferly⁹,
 And said, "Quhat! will yone Scottis fycht?"
 'Ya sekyrly!' said a knycht,
 Schyr Ingrame the Wmfrawill hat he¹⁰;
 And said, 'Forsuth now, Schyr, I se
 It is the mast ferlyfull sycht
 That euyre I saw, quhen for to fycht
 The Scottis men has tane on hand

⁹ he marvelled.¹⁰ he was called.

Agayne the mycht of Ingland
 In plane hard feild to giff bataile.
¹ trust. Bot, and ye will trow¹ my consaill,
 Ye sall discomfyt thaim lychtly.
² hence. Withdrawys you hyne² sodandly,
 With bataillis and with penownys,
³ pavilions. Quhill that we pass our pailyownyis³;
 And ye sall se alsone that thai,
⁴ despite. Magre⁴ thair lordys, sall brek aray
 And scaile⁵ thaim our harnays⁶ to ta.
⁵ scatter. And quhen we se thaim scalit sua
⁶ furnishing. Prik we than on thaim hardely,
 And we sall haf thaim wele lychtly :
⁷ embodied. For than sall nane be knyt⁷ to fycht
 That may withstand your mekill mycht.
 "I will nocht," said the king, "perfay,
 Do sa: for thar sall na man say
 That I sall eschew the bataill,
⁸ rabble. Na withdraw me for sic rangaille⁸."

Quhen this wes said, that er said I,
 The Scottis men comounaly
 Knelyt all doune, to God to pray.
 And a schort prayer thar maid thai
 To God, to help thaim in that fycht.
 And quhen the Inglis king had sycht
 Off thaim kneland, he said in hy,
 "Yone folk knel to ask mercy."
 Schyr Ingrahame said, 'Ye say suth now.
 Thai ask mercy; bot nane at yow.
 For thair trespas to God thai cry.

I tell yow a thing sekырly,
 That yone men will all wyn or de:
 For doute of dede¹ thai sall nocht fle.¹ 1 fear of death.
 "Now be it sa than," said the king.
 And than, but langer delaying,
 Thai gert trump till the assemblé². 2 joining of battle.
 On athir sid men mycht than se
 Mony a wycht man and worthi
 Redy to do chewalry.

[The divisions of Edward Bruce, Murray, and Douglas each are attacked. The king, observing how the English archers gall his troops, despatches Sir Robert Keith with five hundred light horse, who destroys and routs them utterly. Meanwhile the Scottish archers make havoc among the English cavalry.]

And the gud king Robert, that ay
 Wes fillyt off full gret bounté,
 Saw how that his bataillis thre
 Sa hardely assemblyt thar
 And sa weill in the fycht thaim bar,
 And swa fast on thair fayis gan ding³ 3 drive.
 That him thocht nane had abaysing,
 And how the archeris war scalyt then,
 He was all blyth; and till his men
 He said, "Lordingis, now luk that ye
 Worthy and off gud cowyn⁴ be 4 artifice, conduct.
 At thys assemblé, and hardy,
 And assembl sa sturdely
 That na thing may befor yow stand.
 Our men are sa freschly fechtand
 That thai thair fayis has grathyt sua⁵ 5 prepared so.

¹ undertake.

That be thai pressyt, Ik wndreta¹,
 A litill fastyr, ye sal se
 That thai discumfyt sone sall be."

² driven (back) a
 great deal.
³ fiercely.

⁴ achievements.

Quhen this wes said thai held thair way,
 And on ane feld assemblyt thai
 Sa stoutly, that at thair cummyng
 Thair fayis war ruschyt a gret thing².
 Thar mycht men se men felly³ fycht,
 And men that worthi war and wycht
 Do mony worthi wasselage⁴.

⁵ also broke
 (rank).

Thai faucht as thai war in a rage;
 For quhen the Scottis archery
 Saw thair fayis sa sturdely
 Stand in-to bataill thaim agayn,
 With all thair mycht and all thair mayn
 Thai layid on, as men out of wit,
 And quhar thai with full strak mycht hyt,
 Thar mycht na armur stynt thair strak.
 Thai to fruchyt⁵ that thai mycht our-tak,
 And with axys sic duschys gave
 That thai helmys and hedis clave.
 And thar fayis rycht hardely

⁶ weapons strong
 of steel.
⁷ engaged in well.

Met thaim, and dang on thaim douchtely,
 With wapnys that war styth of stele⁶.
 Thar wes the bataill strekyt wele⁷.

⁸ breaking.⁹ rushing together.¹⁰ grinning.¹¹ groaning.

Sa gret dyn thar wes of dyntis,
 As wapnys apon armur styntis,
 And off speris sa gret bresting⁸,
 And sic thrang⁹, and sic thrysting,
 Sic gyrnyng¹⁰, granyng¹¹, and sa gret

A noyis, as thai gan othyr beit,
 And ensenyeys¹ on ilka sid,
 Gewand and takand woundis wid,
 That it wes hydwyss for to her.

¹ war-cries.

All thair four bataillis with that wer
 Fechtand in a frount halyly.
 A mychty God! how doughtely
 Schyr Eduuard the Bruce and his men
 Amang thair fayis contenyt thaim then!
 Fechtand in sa gud covyn,
 Sa hardy, worthy, and sa fyne,
 That thar waward ruschyt was²,
 And, maugre tharis, left the place,
 And till thar gret rout to warand
 Thai went; that tane had apon hand
 Sa gret anoy that thai war effrayit
 For Scottis that thaim hard assayit³
 That than war in a schiltrum⁴ all.
 Quha hapnyt in-to that fycht to fall
 I trow agane he suld nocht ryss.
 Thar mycht men se on mony wyss
 Hardimentis eschewyt⁵ doughtely,
 And mony that wycht war and hardy
 Sone liand wndre fete all dede,
 Quhar all the feld off blud wes rede.
 Armys and quhytyss⁶ that thai bar
 With blud war sa defoulyt thar
 That thai mycht nocht descroyit⁷ be.
 A mychty God! quha than mycht se
 That Stewart, Waltre, and his rout,

² their vanguard
 was driven
 (back).

³ attacked.

⁴ a host in round
 formation.

⁵ daring deeds
 achieved.

⁶ military hats.

⁷ described.

- And the gud Douglas that wes sa stout,
 Fechtand in-to that stalwart stour,
 He suld say that till all honour
 Thai war worthi that in that fycht
 Sa fast pressyt thair fayis mycht,
 That thaim ruschyt quhar thai yeid.
 Thar men mycht se mony a steid
 Fleand on stray, that lord had nane.
- ¹ attention.
 A Lord! quha then gud tent¹ had tane
 Till the gud erle of Murreff,
 And his, that sa gret rowtis geff²,
 And faucht sa fast in that battaill,
 Tholand³ sic paynys and trawaill
 That thai and tharis maid sic debat⁴
 That quhar thai come thai maid thaim gat.
 Than mycht men her enseynyeis cry,
 And Scottis men cry hardely,
 "On thaim! On thaim! On thaim! Thai faile!"
 With that sa hard thai gan assaile,
 And slew all that thai mycht our-ta,
 And the Scottis archeris alsua
 Schot amang them sa deliuerly,
- ⁵ vexing.
 Engrewand⁵ thaim sa gretumly,
 That quhat for thaim that with thaim faucht
 That swa gret rowtis to thaim raucht
 And pressyt thaim full egrely,
 And quhat for arowis that felly⁶
 Mony gret woundis gan thaim ma
 And slew fast off thair horss alsua,
 That thai wandyst a litill wei⁷.
 Thai dred sa gretly then to dey
- ⁶ in dire manner.
⁷ showed fear somewhat.

That thair cowyn wes wer and wer¹.
 For thai that fechtand with thaim wer
 Set hardement and strenth and will
 And hart and corage als thar-till,
 And all thair mayne and all thair mycht,
 To put thaim fully to [the] flycht.

¹ their carriage
 was worse and
 worse.

[At this point the Scottish camp-followers, who had been ordered to the rear by Bruce, desiring to see the battle, mount sheets on poles for banners, and, fifteen thousand strong, are seen coming over the Gillies' Hill. The distant sight utterly disheartens the wearied English, who take it for the approach of fresh Scottish reserves. As Bruce leads a new attack in person they begin to give way, and the rout is soon general.]

And quhen the king of England
 Saw his men fley in syndry place,
 And saw his fayis rout that was
 Worthyn² sa wycht and sa hardy—
 That all his folk war halyly
 Sa stonayit³ that thai had na mycht
 To stynt⁴ thair fayis in the fycht—
 He was abaysyt⁵ sa gretumly
 That he and his cumpany,
 Fyve hundre, armyt all at rycht,
 In-till a frusch⁶ all tok the flycht,
 And to the castell held thair way.
 And yeyt haiff Ik hard som men say
 That of Walence Schir Aymer,
 When he the feld saw wencusyt ner,
 Be the reyngye led away the king,
 Agayne his will, fra the fechting.

² become.

³ dismayed.

⁴ stay.

⁵ confounded.

⁶ broken rout.

And quhen Schyr Gylis the Argenté
 Saw the king thus and his menye

- Schap thaim to fley sa spedyly,
 He come rycht to the king in hy
 And said, "Schyr, sen it is sua
 That ye thusgat your gat will ga¹,
 Hawys gud day! for agayne will I.
 Yeyt fled I neuir sekylly²,
 And I cheyss her to bid³ and dey,
 Than for to lyve schamly, and fley."
 Hys bridill, but mar abad,
 He turnyt, and agayne he rade,
 And on Eduuard the Bruyss rout,
 That wes sa sturdy and sa stout
 As drede off nakyn⁴ thing had he,
 He prikyt, cryand, "The Argenté!"
 And thai with spuris swa him met,
 And swa fele⁵ speris on him set,
 That he and hors war chargyt swa
 That bathe till the erd gan ga,
 And in that place thar slane wes he.
 Off hys deid wes rycht gret pité;
 He wes the thrid best knycht, perfay,
 That men wist lywand⁶ in his day.

[Thirty thousand dead and all the English baggage are left on the field. Douglas pursues King Edward to Dunbar, and night falls upon the weary but joyful army of Scotland.]

- And on the morn quhen day wes lycht
 The king raiss, as his willis⁷ was.
 Than ane Inglis knycht, throw cass⁸,
 Hapnyt that he yeid wawerand⁹,
 Swa that na man laid on him hand.
 In a busk¹⁰ he hid hys armyng,

⁷ custom.

⁸ by chance.

⁹ wandering, *lit.*
wawering.

¹⁰ bush.

And waytyt quhill he saw the king
 In the morne cum forth arly:
 Till him than is he went in hy.
 Schyr Marmeduk the Twengue he hycht¹.
 He raykyt² till the king all rycht,
 And halyst³ him upon his kne.
 "Welcum, Schyr Marmeduk," said he;
 "To quhat man art thow presoner?"
 'To nane,' he said, 'bot to you her.
 I yeld me at your will to be.'
 "And I ressave the, Schyr," said he.
 Than gert⁴ he tret him curtasly.
 He duelt lang in his cumpany,
 And syne till Ingland him send he,
 Arayit weile, but ransoun fre,
 And geff him gret gyftis tharto.
 A worthi man that sua wald do
 Mycht mak him gretly for to prise⁵.

¹ was named.² reached, *lit.*
ranged.³ saluted.⁴ caused.⁵ be praised.

Quhen Marmeduk apon this wiss
 Was yoldyn⁶, as Ik to yow say,
 Than come Schir Philip the Mowbray
 And to the king yauld the castell.
 His cunnand hes he haldyn⁷ well,
 And with him tretyt sua the king,
 That he belewyty⁸ of his duelling,
 And held him lelely his fay
 Quhill the last end off his lyf day.

⁶ yielded.⁷ his covenant
has he kept.⁸ delivered up.

[Among the results of the battle Bruce receives back his queen
 and his daughter Marjory in exchange for the Earl of Hereford.
 Marjory is married to Walter Stewart, and the king sets his
 realm in order.]

The King and the Lavyndar.

[After the battle of Bannockburn the poem proceeds to recount the enterprises and successes of the king's generals. While Douglas holds the Border, Edward Bruce carries victory into Ireland. King Robert himself during one campaign takes the command there, and during their march then a point of chivalry is noticed.]

- The king has hard a woman cry ;
 He askyt quhat that wes in hy¹.
 "It is the layndar², Schyr," said ane,
 "That hyr child-ill³ rycht now has tane,
 And mon⁴ leve now behind ws her :
 Tharfor scho makys yone iwill⁵ cher."
 The king said, 'Certis, it war pité
 That scho in that poynt⁶ left suld be ;
 For certis I trow thar is na man
 That he ne will rew a woman than.'
 Hiss ost all thar arestyt he,
 And gert a tent sone stentit⁷ be,
 And gert hyr gang⁸ in hastily,
 And othyr wemen to be hyr by.
 Quhill scho wes deliuer he bad,
 And syne furth on his wayis raid.
 And how scho furth suld caryit be,
 Or euir he furth fur⁹, ordanyt he.
 This wes a full gret curtasy,
 That swilk¹⁰ a king, and sa mychty,
 Gert his men duell on this maner,
 Bot for a pouir lauender.
- ¹ in haste.
² laundress.
³ travail-pains.
⁴ must.
⁵ evil.
⁶ extremity.
⁷ set up.
⁸ go.
⁹ fared forth.
¹⁰ such.

The Death of Bruce.

[Berwick, the last stronghold in Scotland held by the English, is taken by Douglas and Randolph, and Walter Stewart installed as governor. Then follows a long, minute, and stirring account of its siege by the English king. Bruce finally relieves the place by making a counter-march into England which draws off the besiegers. In Ireland Edward Bruce is slain at last in a rash attack against hopeless odds, and that country in consequence is presently abandoned to its English holders. Encouraged by this event, Edward II. makes one more attempt upon Scotland with his whole force. But Bruce burns and drives all forage into the north, and the English army, finding neither enemy to fight nor provisions to eat, is compelled to retire. It is followed by Bruce, and finally at Biland, in Yorkshire, is in its famished state put to utter rout. King Robert next devotes himself to the establishment of justice and order in his kingdom, concludes and enforces a peace with England, and after, with the consent of his parliament, settling the succession first on his son, and, failing him, on the children of his daughter Marjory and Walter Stewart, dies in ease and honour at Cardross on the Clyde.]

Quhen all this thing thus tretit wes
 And affermyt with sekyrnes¹,
 The king to Cardros went in hy,
 And thar him tuk sa fellely²
 The seknes, and him trawailit swa,
 That he wyst him behowyt to ma
 Off all his liff the commoun end,
 That is to dede, quhen God will send.
 Tharfor his lettrys sone send he
 For the lordis off his countré,
 And thai come as thai biddyn had.
 His testament than has he maid
 Befor bath lordis and prelatis;
 And to religioun of ser statis³
 For hele of his saule gaf he
 Siluer into gret quantité.

¹ confirmed
 securely.

² severely.

³ several esta-
 blishments.

- He ordanyt for his saule weill,
 And quhen this done wes ilkadele¹
 He said, "Lordingis, swa is it gayn
 With me that thar is nocht bot ane,
 That is the dede, withowtyn drede,
 That ilk man mon thole off nede.
 And I thank God that has me sent
 Space in this lyve me to repent;
 For throwch me and my werraying²
 Off blud has bene rycht gret spilling,
 Quhar mony sakles³ men war slayn.
 Tharfor this seknes and this payn
 I tak in thank for my trespass.
 And myn hart fichyt⁴ sekirly was
 Quhen I wes in prosperité,
 Off my synnys to sauffyt⁵ be
 To trawaill apon Goddis fayis.
 And sen he now me till him tayis⁶,
 Swa that the body may na-wyss
 Fullfill that the hart gan dewyss⁷,
 I wald the hart war thidder sent
 Quhar-in consawyt⁸ wes that entent.
 Tharfor I pray yow euirilkan⁹
 That ye amang yow chess me ane
 That be honest, wiss, and wicht,
 And off his hand a noble knycht,
 On Goddis fayis my hart to ber
 Quhen saule and corss disseueryt er.
 For I wald it war worthily
 Broucht thar, sen God will nocht that I
 Haiff pouer thidderwart to ga."

¹ every whit.² war-making.³ blameless.⁴ fixed.⁵ absolved.⁶ takes.⁷ devise.⁸ conceived.⁹ everyone.

Than war thair hartis all sar wa¹
 That nayne mycht hald him fra greting².
 He bad thaim leve thair sorowing;
 For it, he said, mycht nocht releve,
 And mycht thaim rycht gretly engreve³;
 And prayit thaim in hy to do
 The thing that thai war chargit to.
 Than went thai furth with drery mode.
 Amang thaim thai thoct it gode
 That the worthi lord of Douglas
 Best schapyn for that trawail was.
 And quhen the king hard that thai swa
 Had ordanyt him his hart to ta
 That he mast yarnyt suld it haff,
 He said, "Sa God him-self me saiff!
 I hald me rycht weill payit that yhe
 Haff chosyn him; for his bounté
 And his worschip set my yaryng
 Ay sen I thocht to do this thing,
 That he it with him thar suld ber.
 And sen ye all assentit er
 It is the mar likand⁴ to me.
 Lat se now quhat thar-till sayis he."
 And quhen the gud lord of Douglas
 Wist that thing thus spokyn was
 He come and knelit to the king,
 And on this wiss maid him thanking.
 "I thank you gretly, lord," said he,
 "Off mony largess and gret bounté
 That yhe haff done me felsyss⁵
 Sen fyrst I come to your seruice.

¹ sorely woful.² weeping.³ vex.⁴ agreeable.⁵ very often.

- Bot our all thing I mak thanking
 That ye sa dyng¹ and worthi thing
 As your hart that enlumynyt wes
 Of all bounté and all prowes
 Will that I in my yemsall² tak.
 For yow, Schyr, I will blythly mak
 This trawaill, gif God will me gif
 Layser and space swa lang to lyff."
 The king him thankyt tendrely.
 Than wes nane in that cumpany
 That thai na wepyt for pité.
 Thar cher anoyus wes to se.
- Quhen the Lord Douglas on this wiss
 Had wndretane sa hey empriss³
 As the gud kyngis hart to ber
 On Goddis fayis apoun wer
 Prissyt for his empriss wes he.
 And the kingis infirmyté
 Woux mar and mar, quhill at the last
 The dulfull dede approchit fast.
 And quhen he had gert till him do
 All that gud crystyn man fell to
 With werray⁴ repentance he gaf
 The gast, that God till hewyn haiff
 Amang his chossyn folk to be
 In joy, solace, and angell gle!
 And fra his folk wyst he wes ded
 The sorow raiss fra steid to steid⁵.
 Thar mycht men se men ryve⁶ thair har,
 And comounly kychtis gret full sar⁷,
- ¹ *digne*.
² *keeping*.
³ *enterprise*.
⁴ *true (vrai)*.
⁵ *place to place*.
⁶ *tear*.
⁷ *weep full sore*.

And thar newffys¹ oft samyn² dryve,
 And as woud³ men thair clathis ryve,
 Regratand his worthi bounté,
 His wyt, his strenth, his honesté;
 And our all, the gret cumpany
 That he thaim maid oft curtasly.
 "All our defens," thai said, "allace!
 And he that all our comford was,
 Our wyt and all our gouernyng,
 Allace! is brought her till ending!
 His worschip and his mekill⁴ mycht
 Maid all that war with him sa wycht⁵
 That thai mycht neur abaysit be
 Quhill forouth⁶ thaim thai mycht him se.
 Allace! quhat sall we do or say?
 For on lyff quhill he leystyt, ay
 With all our nychtbowris dred war we,
 And in-till mony ser countré
 Off our worschip sprang the renoun;
 And that wes all for his persoune."
 With swilk⁷ wordis thai maid thair mayn;
 And sekyrly woundre wes nane⁸,
 For better gouvernour than he
 Mycht in na countré fundyn be.

¹ hands.
² together.
³ mad.

⁴ great.

⁵ able.

⁶ in front of.

⁷ such.

⁸ assuredly it was
no wonder.

[The poem ends with the death of Douglas in his attempt to carry the Bruce's heart through Spain to the Holy Land. Successful in a great battle against the Saracens, the Scottish company presses the pursuit too far, and some of the knights are presently surrounded. Perceiving Sir William St. Clair battling against hopeless odds, Douglas exclaims, "Yonder brave knight will be slain if he have not help," and spurring again into the fray he falls there with his friends. The king's heart is brought home again, and buried by Murray in Melrose Abbey.]

ANDROW OF WYNTOUN.

K



ANDROW OF WYNTOUN.

THERE have been chroniclers and there have been historians, and the office of the one is not to be mistaken for the office of the other. The chronicler undertakes to do no more than set down in the order of their happening the events and circumstances of a certain time. The object of the historian, on the other hand, is to sift and assort facts, to show their relation, and by their proper arrangement and interpretation to reveal the principles of their occurrence, the tragedy and comedy which everywhere underlie the outer movement of events. Androw of Wyntoun made no claim to the title of historian. He called his work simply a chronicle of Scotland, and it does not appear that he aimed at greater things than the name suggests. It may be said that the opportunity lay to his hand, as an ecclesiastic familiar with the sources of information, to write a great epic of the Scottish Church, displaying behind the events of history that church's rise to power among the estates of the realm. He did not, however, essay the laurels of the epic poet. Other ideals of poetry, moreover, probably formed as small a part of his

object. As he did not attempt any masterly grouping of the march of events towards a national purpose, so, it would seem, he had no thought of touching with artistic design the plain circumstances of his narrative. The reader will look through the *Cronykil of Scotland* almost in vain for the excitement of a dramatic situation, the contrast and climax of human emotion. Hardly at all will he find that focussing of objects to their most interesting point of view which distinguishes a picture from a map, the work of the artist from the work of the artizan. Nowhere, it may safely be said, will he taste the breath of that ethereal wine, strangely stirring the heart, which is the vintage of great poetic genius.

The chief value of Wyntoun's work must remain its value as a chronicle, its worth as material for history. In this respect its importance has long been recognised, and out of its substance, by craftsmen like Tytler, Scott, and Hill Burton, have been quarried the corner-stones of many a historic edifice. As material for poetry, however, if not always as poetry itself, the *Cronykil* is deserving of more attention than it has yet received. Many of the circumstances of the remote period set forth in its pages have a quaint picturesqueness peculiar to themselves. Wyntoun had a happy faculty for collecting and incorporating typical facts and stories; and amid the huge mass of his narrative, neglected mostly because of the labour of finding them, there are discoverable glimpses of scenes and episodes set in a romantic atmosphere without conscious effort of art. For the fair

preservation of these, rather than for the poor fact of his work being presented in form of rhythm, the author of the *Orygynale Cronykil* must maintain a place of respect among the early poets of Scotland.

Almost all that is known of Wyntoun himself has been gathered from the pages of his work. Regarding his origin nothing whatever has been discovered, and even with the aid of his own occasional references his personality comes but dimly out of the cloister dusk of the past. His chronicle is supposed to have been finished between 1419 and 1424, as it mentions the death of Robert, Duke of Albany, which occurred at the former date, but says nothing of the return of James I. from captivity, which took place in the latter year. Probably he did not long survive the completion of his work. In the prologue to the last book he declares himself an aged man :

Off this Tretys the last end
 Tyl bettyr than I am I commend ;
 For, as I stabil myne intent,
 Offt I fynd impediment
 Wyth sudane and fers maladis
 That me cumbris mony wis,
 And elde me mastreis wyth hir brevis,
 Ilke day me sare aggrevis.
 Scho has me maid monitioune
 To se for a conclusioun
 The quhilk behovis to be of det.
 Quhat term of tyme of that be set
 I can wyt it be na way ;
 Bot, weil I wate, on schorte delay
 At a court I mon appeire
 Fell accusationis thare til here,
 Quhare na help thare is bot grace.

In the chartulary of St. Andrew's as early as 1395, at a perambulation held "in presentia serenissimi principis Roberti Ducis Albanie," Wyntoun is mentioned as Prior of the island in Loch Leven; and as he must have been of mature years before obtaining this position his birth has been set about the middle of the reign of David II., say about 1350.

In the prologue to the *Cronykil* he describes himself:

And, for I wyll nane bere the blame
 Off my defawte, [this] is my name
 Be baptysyne, ANDROWE OF WYNTOUNE,
 Off Sanctandrowys a Chanowne
 Regular, bot noucht-for-thi
 Off thaim all the lest worthy;
 Bot off thare grace and thaire fawoure
 I wes, but meryt, made Priowre
 Off the Ynche wythin Lochlewyne,
 Hawand tharof my tytill ewyne
 Off Sanctandrowys dyocesye,
 Betwene the Lomownde and Bennarty.

Notwithstanding his modest denial of merit it may be understood that Androw of Wyntoun, as an ecclesiastic, was likely to be a man of no mean powers. The prior of an ancient monastery, who was also a canon regular of the metropolitan see of St. Andrew's, could hardly be an altogether insignificant person. The Church in Scotland, owning, it is said, from a third to a half of the whole lands of the country, was then approaching the height of her political power, and the dignities of St. Andrew's See were prizes sought after by the best blood and the most ambitious in the realm. Five sub-priories

belonged to St. Andrew's: Monymusk in Aberdeenshire, the Isle of May in the Firth of Forth, Pittenweem in Fife, and Portmoak and St. Serf's in Kinross. The last-named religious house, situated on the inch or island in Lochleven, was said to have been a Culdee monastery founded by Brud, king of the Picts, about the year 700. In this still, romantic spot Wyntoun must have spent many of the ripper years of his life; and here, with little to break the quiet of the hours but the lapse of waves on the islet beach and the sweet chime at intervals of the monastery bells, it is probable he wrote the pages of his book.

A few years earlier John of Fordun, a chantry priest of the cathedral of Aberdeen, had written in Latin his chronicle of the Scottish nation, afterwards amplified by Bower, who died abbot of Inch Colme, into the work now known as the *Scoti-chronicon*. But it is certain that Wyntoun never saw this work, and when the suggestion of writing a narrative of national events was made to him he quietly set about the task of independent research and original composition in the vernacular.

The inception of the work is owed to an ancestor of the noble family of Wemyss.

This tretys sympylly
I made at the instans of a larde
That hade my serwys in his warde,
~~Schyr~~ Jhone of the Wemys be rycht name,
An honest knyght and of gude fame.

As it stands, the *Cronykil* is the earliest composition of strictly historical purpose extant in the vernacular

of the north, and, strangely enough, for fully two hundred years afterwards, excepting the translations of Ballenden and Read, no other history of the Scottish people was written in the Scottish tongue. A considerable number of manuscripts of the work are in existence. The best of them is the Royal MS. in the British Museum, a transcript made for George Barclay of Achrody probably not later than 1430. From this, collated with MSS. of the Cotton, Harleian, and Advocates' libraries, the first printed edition was made by David Macpherson in 1795. In that edition, upon the principle of excluding all that did not immediately belong to the history of Scotland, nearly the whole of the first five books of the *Cronykil* were omitted. In 1872-79 another excellent edition by Mr. David Laing, including these books, was printed at Edinburgh in three portly volumes as part of a series of the historians of Scotland. Both of these editions are now somewhat difficult to procure.

Wyntoun called his work *The Orygynale Cronykil of Scotland*, that is, as he explained in his prologue, a chronicle narrating events from the first beginning of things. Accordingly, in the orthodox fashion of his time, he begins with the Creation, and the greater part of the first five books is occupied with the long descent through sacred and profane history. It is only at the beginning of the sixth book that the author settles down to his more immediate subject. The narrative is divided into nine books of very unequal length.

In honowre of the Ordrys nyne
Off haly Angelys.

Each book is introduced by a prologue and a summary of chapters, and each chapter has a rhyming title, as

This next folowand Chapter says
 Quhat done wes in second Robertis days.

Extraordinary care is taken to mention at least the year of each event. A great part of the *Cronykil*, indeed, is the merest recording of names and occurrences and their dates, and in spite of all the ingenious variety of the rhymes the reader is apt to grow weary of bare statements of fact beginning

A thousand aucht and fourty yhere
 Fra the byrth of our Lord dere,

or

A thousand, a hundyr, thretty and nyne
 Yheris fra the swete Wyrgyne
 Had borne hyr Sowne.

This characteristic, however valuable from the historical point of view, seriously interferes with pretensions to poetic charm. So anxious was Wyntoun to be authentic that he has actually introduced two speeches in plain prose, one of them being the declaration of Henry IV. on assuming the English crown after the deposition of Richard II. On the other hand, he shared the easy habit of the chroniclers of his age, such as Robert of Gloucester and Robert of Brunne, of omitting such portions of history as were already known to be written by other hands. For this reason he omits the history of Alexander the Great, the wars of the Saxons and Britons, the actions of Wallace and Bruce, and the origin of the Stewarts.

The vanity of poetic authorship seems to have influenced him but little, for, besides alluding to his contemporary Barbour again and again in the most self-deprecatory terms, he has incorporated in his eighth book, without alteration, some three hundred lines of *The Bruce*. A considerable portion of the *Cronykil* indeed was avowedly not written by himself. He informs the reader that while engaged upon the work he was presented with a narrative written by some unknown person, and finding it entirely suitable for his purpose, he simply inserted it in his manuscript. In this way thirty-six clearly defined chapters, from the birth of David II. to the death of Robert II., are accounted for. To the same liberality of quotation is owed the preservation of a little elegaic song on the death of Alexander III., which Macpherson considered to be contemporary with the event, that is nearly ninety years older than Barbour's work.

For the purposes of the historian, Wyntoun's work has been simply invaluable. For the events of the last fifty years of his narrative, it has to be remembered, he was himself personally an authority; while "it can scarcely be doubted," says Dr. Irving, "that he had access to many important documents which are irretrievably lost." The reliability of the *Cronykil* is discovered wherever it is possible to compare its account with such unquestioned testimony as the *Fœdera Angliæ* and the remains of the *Register of the Priory of St. Andrew's*. In the famous case of the Sutherland succession Lord Hailes made large use of Wyntoun for evidence of ancient Scottish laws and

customs of inheritance ; and Macpherson declared that "the compiler of a Scottish peerage might obtain from Wyntoun more true information concerning the ancient noble families of Scotland than is to be found in any work extant."

Before most things else, perhaps, Wyntoun was a churchman. Loyal to the uttermost to his order, he takes special delight in recording the acts and deaths of the prelates of St. Andrew's. He carefully notices every founding of an abbey ; and Alexander I. and David I. have the warmest commendation from him for their munificence to the church. Curious glimpses of the theology of that day are to be had here and there in his pages. In the fifth book of the *Cronykil*, St. Serf, the patron saint of Wyntoun's priory, holds a long and somewhat scornful interview with the Devil, in which the fiend, for the confusion of his interlocutor, propounds questions as to where God existed before the making of heaven and earth, and the like. Malcolm IV. also appears after death to a friend and furnishes information regarding a future state.

Touches of credulity and superstition of this sort, natural to the times, do not, however, affect the truth of the material narrative. Liberal, rather, and open-minded beyond his age, Wyntoun displays little of the rude prejudice which was apt to disfigure the patriotic writing of the time. Only twice does he launch into invective against the national enemy—upon the cruelty of Edward I. to the Scots, and upon the seizure in time of truce of the young Prince James. Perhaps

the fact most significant of the nationality of the chronicler is that amid all his references and quotations he does not once mention the works of Langland, Gower, or Chaucer, all of whom were his contemporaries, and flourished in his time. Frequently indeed the reader is tempted to wish that Wyntoun had indulged a trifle more in the rhetoric of emotional description. It is true that the cruel deaths by starvation of the gallant Sir Alexander Ramsay at Hermitage and of the gay young Duke of Rothesay at Falkland might have been dangerous ground just then to posture upon; but pictures might have been made of incidents like the tragic death of Thomas à Becket on the Cathedral steps at Canterbury, the momentous fall from the cliff of Alexander III. at Kinghorn, and the vindication of the freedom of the North by her sons at the battle of Stirling Bridge. These afforded room for stirring narrative—for more, at anyrate, than the bare mention accorded by the chronicler.

Wyntoun, however, went his own way. Other writers, like Boece, have hidden historic truth altogether under their garniture of fancy, and by contrast the simple plainness of Wyntoun has value and effect. In these pages one reads with an interest not less striking for their simplicity of statement, passages like those detailing the original story of Macbeth, the granting of the boon of Macduff, or the story of the Lady Devorgille and the founding of Sweetheart Abbey. Many such episodes, otherwise unknown or strangely distorted, are found here

in their historic form. Authentic insight, too, is frequently afforded into the manners of those times, as in the narrative of the rough jousting at Berwick and in the episode with which the *Cronykil* concludes, detailing how the Earl of Mar in 1418 passed over to Paris, and there at the sign of "The Tynny Plate" kept open house with regal magnificence for twelve weeks. Stripped of all glamour of sentiment, the rudeness and cruelties of the age appear in realistic strength, as when, rather than yield her trust, the brave Lady of Seton sees her hostage son hanged before her eyes. At the same time the ideals of those centuries are sometimes flashed out in a sentence. It is said of David I.:

The day he wes bath Kyng and Knycht,
A Mwnk devote he wes the nycht.

The last episode of the *Cronykil*, detailing the adventures of the Earl of Mar abroad, has no vital connection with the body of the narrative. It was probably an after addition to the volume, and may have been written by way of acknowledgment of some political favour. The work really ends with the capture of James I., an event which happened fourteen years before the date of writing. As Macpherson remarked, at that period "it was rather dangerous for truth to tread too close upon the heels of time." The good prior therefore acted with prudence in bringing his narrative when he did to a close.

It is nearly five hundred years since Wyntoun laid

down his pen. During that time, though never popular with the popularity of Barbour and Blind Harry, he has probably never been quite forgotten. His position as a national chronicler accounts to a large extent for this. But the reader who grows familiar with his pages to-day discovers what may perhaps be another reason. He finds himself making the acquaintance, not only of a teller of quaint historic tales, but of a gentle and pious soul.

THE ORYGYNALE CRONYKIL OF SCOTLAND.

Early Britain.

[The *Cronykil* begins with a narrative of the earliest events of sacred history—the state of angels, the creation, the flood, &c. Then follows a geographical description of the three continents, ending with the British Isles.]



BLESSYDE Bretayne beelde¹ sulde be ¹ model.

Off all the ilys in the se,
Quhare flowrys are fele² on feldys fayre, ² many.

Hale³ off hewe, haylsum off ayre. ³ Perfect.

Off all corne thare is copy⁴ gret, ⁴ abundance.

Pese and atys, bere and qwhet;

Bath froyt on tre and fysche in flwde,

And tyll all catale pasture gwde.

Solynus [sayis] in Bretanny

Sum steddys⁵ growys sa habowndanly ⁵ places.

Off gyrs⁶ that sum-tym, bot thair fe⁷ ⁶ grass.

Fra fwth off mete refrenyht be⁸, ⁷ cattle.

Thair fwde sall turne thame to peryle, ⁸ Be restrained from over-feeding.

To rot, or bryst, or dey sum quhyle.

Thare wylde in wode has welth at wylle;

Thare hyrdys hydys holme and hille;

Thare bewys bowys all for byrtht⁹; ⁹ branches bend with burden.

¹ blackbird and
thrush contest
in mirth.

² all kinds of
deer.

³ fishing.

Bath merle and maŵeys mellys off myrtht¹
Thare huntyng is at allkyne dere².
And richt gud hawlkyn³ on rywëre;
Off fysche thair is habowndance,
And nedfulle thyng to mannys substance.

⁴ no kind of
venomous
beast.

⁵ above.

⁶ eft or adder,
toad, or frog.

Be west Bretane is lyand
All the landys off Irlande,
That is ane land off nobyl ayre,
Off fyrth and felde and flowrys fayre.
Thare nakyn best off wënym⁴ may
Lywë or lest atoure⁵ a day,
As ask or eddyre, tade or pade⁶,
Suppos that thai be thiddyr hade.

The Rise of Macbeth.

[The generations of the world, the events of oriental and classic history, and the due succession of potentates, emperors, and popes are narrated. Among other legends the travels are told of the "King's Stone," or "Stone of Destiny," from Spain, first to Ireland, then to Scone in Scotland, with its oracle:

NI FALLAT FATUM, SCOTI, QUOCUNQUE LOCATUM
INVENIENT LAPIDEM, REGNARE TENENTUR IBIDEM.

The descent of the Scottish kings is traced to Duncan, a somewhat free-living monarch, who is slain by his sister's son at Elgin.]

⁷ treason.

⁸ uncle.

In this tyme, as yhe herd me tell
Off trewsone⁷ that in Ingland fell,
In Scotland nere the lyk cas
Be Makbeth-Fynlayk practykyd was,
Quhen he mwrthrysyde hys awyne eme⁸
Be hope that he had in a dreme

That he sawe quhen he was yhyng
 In hows duelland wyth the king,
 That fayrly trettyd hym and welle
 In all that langyd hym ilke delle¹.
 For he wes hys systyr sone
 Hys yharnyng all he gert be done².

¹ belonged to him
 every whit.

² Caused his
 desire to be
 done.

A nycht he thowcht in hys dreming
 That sittand he was besyd the king
 At a sete in hwntyng, swa
 In-till a leysh had grewhundys twa.
 He thowcht quhile he was swa sittand
 He sawe thre wemen by gangand³,
 And thai wemen than thowcht he
 Thre werd systrys mast lyk to be.
 The fyrst he hard say gangand by,
 "Lo, yhondyr the Thayne off Crwmbawchty⁴!" ⁴ Cromarty.
 The tothir woman sayd agayne,
 "Off Morave yhondyre I se the Thayne."
 The thryd than sayd, "I se the Kyng."
 All this he herd in his dremyng.
 Sone efftyre that in his yhowthad
 Off thyr thayndomys he thayne was made;
 Syne neyst he thowcht to be kyng
 Fra Duncanys dayis had tane endyng.

³ going.

The fantasy thus of his dreame
 Movyd hym mast to sla hys eme,
 As he dyd all furth in dede,
 As befor yhe herd me rede⁵;
 And Dame Grwok, hys emys wyff,

⁵ recount.

Tuk and led wyth hyr hys lyff,
 And held hyr bathe hys wyff and qweyne,
 As befor than scho had beyne
 Till hys eme qwene lyvand
 Quhen he wes kyng wyth crowne ryngnand.
 For lytyll in honowre than had he
 The greys¹ off affynyte.

¹ degrees.

All thus quhen his eme wes dede
 He succedyt in his stede,
 And sevyntene wyntyr full rignand
 As kyng he wes than in-till Scotland.
 All hys tyme wes gret plenté
 Abowndand bath in land and se.
 He wes in justice rycht lawchfull,
 And till hys legis all awfull.
 Quhen Leo the Tend wes Pape off Rome
 As pylgryne to the curt he come,
 And in hys almus he sew sylver²
 Till all pure folk that had myster³;
 And all tyme oysyd⁴ he to wyrk
 Profytably for Haly Kyrke.

² strewed silver.

³ need.

⁴ used.

The Boon of Macduff.

[Macbeth, with all his good works, is a fierce king. Watching the building of his castle of Dunsinane he one day notices a yoke of oxen fail in drawing timber. He asks whose oxen these are, and being informed that they belong to Macduff, the thane of Fife, he threatens to put the thane's own neck into the yoke and make him draw. Macduff flies, first to Kennachy, where his wife keeps the pursuing king in treaty till she sees her husband's boat beyond reach on the firth, then to the English court, where Duncan's sons have found refuge. The eldest two refuse the enterprise, but the third, Malcolm, a natural son, is roused to avenge his father. Blessed by Edward the Confessor, and joined by Siward, Lord of Northumberland, he invades Scotland, reaches Birnam, and vanquishes Macbeth with almost the exact circumstances immortalized by Shakespeare. Macduff, however, is not the slayer of the king, nor have the thane's wife and children been put to death by Macbeth. Afterwards, for his services, Macduff asks of Malcolm three things.]

Qwhen Makbeth-Fynlayk thus wes slane
 Off Fyffe Macduff that tyme the Thane
 For his trawaille till his bownté
 At Malcolme as Kyng askyd thire thre¹.
 Fyrst, till hys sete fra the awtare²
 [That he sulde be the kyngis] ledare,
 And in that set thare set hym downe
 Till tak his coronatyowne
 For hym and hys posteryté
 Quhen-eyre the kyng suld crownyd be.*
 Efttyre that the secownd thyng
 Wes that he askyd at the kyng
 Till haue the waward³ off hys bataylle

¹ these three
 (things).

² from the alt

³ vanguard.

* A memorable instance of the exercise of this privilege was the crowning of Robert the Bruce at Scone by the Countess of Buchan in default of her brother, the Earl of Fife.

- Quhat-evyr thai ware wald it assaylle;
 That he and hys suld haȝe always
 Quhen that the kyng suld banare rays.
 1 war. Or gyff the Thayne off Fyff in were¹
 Or in-till host wyth hys powere
 Ware, the waward suld governyd be
 Be hym and hys posteryté.
 Efftyre this, the thryd askyng
 That he askyt at the kyng,
 2 broil. Gyve ony be suddane chawdmellé²
 Hapnyd swa slayne to be
 Be ony off the Thaynys kyne
 Off Fyff, the kynryk all wyth-in,
 Gyve he swa slayne wer gentill-man
 Foure and twenty markys than;
 For a yhwman twelf markys ay
 3 A mulct paid to kinsmen of slain. The slaare suld for kynbwt³ pay,
 And haȝe full remyssyowne
 Fra thine for all that actyowne.
 Gyve ony hapnyd hym to sla
 4 law. That to that lawch⁴ ware bwndyn swa,
 Off that priȝylage evyrmare
 5 Without part. Partles⁵ suld be the slaare.
 Off this lawch are thre capytale;
 That is the Blak Prest off Weddale,
 The Thayne off Fyffe, and the thryd syne
 Quha-eȝyre be Lord off Abbyrnethyne.*

* So late as 1421 the Stewart in Fife received three gentlemen who had been concerned in the slaughter of Melvil of Glenbervy to the *Lach of Clan-Macduff*, three of their friends being securities for proof of their kindred to Macduff.—*Macpherson*.

Malcolm and the Traitor.

[After routing a second usurper, Malcolm (Canmore) is crowned with great solemnity at Scone, and receives the oath of fealty from all who owe homage to the crown.]

In the crystyndome I trow than	
Wes noucht in deid a bettyr man,	
Na lyvand a bettyr knycht	
Na mare manly, stowt, and wycht ¹ .	¹ capable.
Amang all othir famows dedis	
Mony men thus off hym redis ² ;	² recount.
That in hys court thare was a knycht,	
A lord off powerfe and off mycht,	
That set hym till hawe slayne the kyng,	
Hys purpos gyve he till end mycht bryng.	
In-to the kyngys court than	
Thare wes duelland a lele man	
That tald the kyngys awyne persowne	
That that lord set hym be tresowne	
To sla the kyng, gyve that he	
Mycht wyt ³ hys oportunité.	³ perceive.
This lord that tyme wes noucht present	
In-to the court, bot wes absent,	
Bot swne agayne he come wyth ma ⁴	⁴ more.
Than he wes wont, the kyng to sla.	
Wyth curtesy yhit nevyretheles	
Than, as befor, ressayvyd he wes.	
The kyng than warnyd hys menyhé ⁵	⁵ following.
Wyth hym at hwntyng for to be;	
And to that knycht he sayd alsua	
That wyth hym-selff he wald hym ta ⁶	⁶ take.

By hym to syt at that huntyng.
 The knycht consentyd to the kyng.
 Than on the morne, wytht-owtyn let¹,
 The setys and the stable sete²,
 The kyng and that lord alsua
 Togydder rad³, and nane bot tha,
 Fere in the wode; and thare thay fand
 A fayre brade land and a plesand,
 A lytill hill off nobill ayre,
 All wode abowt bathe thyk and fayre.

¹ without hindrance.

² The points and positions being set.

Than thus the kyng sayd to the knycht,
 "On fwte at lykyng thow may lycht,
 Or on hors gyve thow will be,
 As the thynk best. Now ches thow the³,
 Horsyd and armyd als welle
 As I am thow art ilke-dele⁴.
 Thi wapnys ar scharpe and mare redy
 Than ony in-to this sted haue I—
 Dergat⁵, spere, knyff, and swerd.
 Betwene ws dele we now the werd⁶.
 Here is best now to begyn
 Thi purpos, gyve thow will honowre wyn.
 Here is nane that may ws se
 Na help may owthir me or the,
 For-thi [fande]⁷ now wyth all thi mycht
 To do thi purpos as a knycht.
 Set thow haue fadyt thi lawté⁸
 Do this dede yhit wyth honesté.
 Gyve othir thow may or dare or wille,
 Fenyhé the nowcht⁹ to fulfille

³ choose thou.

⁴ every whit.

⁵ Target.

⁶ fate.

⁷ Therefore try.

⁸ Though thou hast failed in loyalty.

⁹ Hesitate not.

Thi¹ heycht¹, thi purpos, and thine athe. ¹ promise.
 Do fourth thi dedys and be noucht lathe.
 Gyve thow thynkys to sla me
 Quhat tyme na nowe may bettyr be
 Wytht fredome, or wyth mare manhed?
 Or gyve thow wald put me to dede
 Wyth venowme or wytht scharpe poysowne,
 That is a wyffis condytyown.
 Or gyve thow wald in-to my bedde
 Prevaly put me to dede,
 That war as in adultery
 Murthrasyd to be wnhonestly.
 Or a knyff gyve thow wald hyd
 Prewely, and thi tyme abyd
 Quhill thow mycht at ese me sla,
 A murtherere mycht do na war than sua². ² worse than so.
 For-thi do as suld a knyght;
 Ga we togyddyr, God dele the ryght!
 Wyth oure foure handys and no ma;
 Thare-on mot all the gamyn ga³. ³ must all the
game go.

Wyth this the knyght all changyd hewe
 Lyk hys purpos all to rewe,
 And hys wysage worthyd wan⁴ ⁴ became pale.
 As he had bene ryght a mad man.
 Thare fell he downe and askyd mercy,
 For all hys purpos wes foly,
 And sayd his lord mycht wyth the lawe
 Hym, as he was wald, bath hang and drawe;
 And swa he yhald hym till hys will
 On hym hys lust all to fulfill
 Bwt ony kyn⁵ condytyowne. ⁵ Without any
sort of.

The kyng than all his actyowne
 Forgaue thi knyght thare qwytyly,
 And tuk hym all till his mercy;
 And thare he become his man
 Mare lele than he wes befor than.
 And the kyng that wes hys lord
 Let na man wyt off thare discord,
 Quhill¹ the knyght hym-selff this cas
 Tald in all as hapnyd was.

¹ Till.

A Wedding Guest's Tale.

[Edward the Confessor dying childless in England, the throne there is seized first by Harold, then by William of Normandy. Upon this, Edgar Atheling, the lawful heir, being too young for resistance, flies with his sisters Margaret and Christian. Their ship is driven into the Firth of Forth, and they land at St. Margaret's Hope. Christian takes the veil, but Margaret is married by King Malcolm, and on the death of her brother carries to the Scottish royal house the rightful succession to the Saxon throne of England. Twice Malcolm raids the southern kingdom, and once Scotland is wasted by William as far as Abernethy. While invading England for the third time, Malcolm and one of his sons are slain at Alnwick. The crown, upon this, is seized by Malcolm's brother, Donald. Donald is expelled by Duncan II., a natural son of Malcolm, but two years later is reinstated by the Earl of Mearns. Finally, after a reign of three years in all, Donald is overthrown, mutilated, and his eyes put out, and the kingdom is held in turn by Malcolm's three sons, Edgar, Alexander I., and David I. Edgar weds his sister Maud to Henry I. of England, youngest son of the Conqueror. At the marriage there are great rejoicings.]

² feast.

Thare made wes a gret mawngery²,
 Quhare gaddryd ware the mast worthy,

³ degree.

And lordys off the grettast gre³

⁴ known.

That kend⁴ ware in that cuntré.

Swa thare wes ane awlde knyght sete
 Amang thame that day at the mete,
 And thir wordys than said he:
 "Now in the rwte is set the tre
 Bathe frwyt and floure all lyk to bere."
 Bot fewe wyst thare-off the manere.
 Than thai reqwryd hym that wes by
 Sittand, to say per cumpany
 Quhat sygnyfyd that mystyk word
 That he swa spak than at the borde.
 The knyght than sayd thame curtasly
 He wald declere it oppynly.

"Quhille," he sayd, "I wes steward
 Till my lord the King Edward,
 And I before hym wes standand
 At his mete, and he sittand
 As he oysyd¹ wyth gret honowre,
 Thare wes a suspect traytoure,
 Set² swa he wes nowcht prowyd in dede,
 Yhit swilk he provyd or thine he yhed³.
 By the kyng than at the mete
 He wes at his tabill sete.
 In his hand a pes off brede
 He had, that rycht thare made his dede.
 For to the kyng this wes hys word
 That day sittand at the bord,
 'My lord, offt yhe have herd off me
 That yhe suld betresyd be,
 And that I suld be tresowne
 Sla and wndo yhoure persowne.

¹ used.² Though.³ such he proved
ere thence he
went.

Gyve evyr I thowcht for to do sua
 I pra God hyne¹ I newyre ga,
 Bot at this ilk² pes of bred
 Here at yhoure bord be now my dede,
 And off it nevyr a crote,
 Quhill I be wyrryd³, owre-pas my throt.⁷
 That brede than he begouth till ete,
 Bot owre hys throt it mycht noucht get.
 Swa, suddanly rycht at the borde
 He wyrryd, and spak newyre a word
 Mare than he spak of that bred
 Before that he deyde in that stede.
 The kyng than gert hym doggydly
 Be drawyn owt, and dyspytwsly⁴
 Oure a hewch⁵ gert cast hym downe,
 Doggys till ete his caryowne.
 My lord," he sayd, yhit sittand
 As in a study [than] musand,
 And efftyr that all this was done
 As yhe have herd, than sayd he sone,
 As vaknyd⁶ owt off his study.

"I wes," he sayd, "in Normandy
 Bydand⁷, as yhe wyst, a quhille
 Owt off this land in gret exyle;
 And swa thare wes twa cunnand men
 That offt to me repayryd then,
 My specyall famylyers,
 Off plesand and off fayre manerys.
 The state off Ingland on a day
 Be thare word sare menyd⁸ thai,

¹ hence.² that this same.³ Till I be choked.⁴ without pity.⁵ crag.⁶ wakened.⁷ Abiding.⁸ lamented.

And sayd Ingland wes lyk to be
 Confowndyd for gret inyqwyté
 That wes done in-to that land;
 For few in it wes than lyvand
 That wes commendyd all wértuws,
 Bot iwill and fals and lycherus,
 [And] nowthir lauch na [yhit] lawté¹
 Wes oysyd na done in that cuntré,
 And lordys be thare awarys
 The sympill folk wald ay supprys;
 Byschapys, prestys, and prelatys
 In hawtayne² pryd ay led thare statys;
 Swa, lyk war³, that inyqwyté
 Suld all wndo this hale⁴ cuntré.
 I askyd," he sayd, "than, qwhat remede
 This mycht helpe or stand in sted.
 Ane off thame than awnsweryd me
 And sayd, 'Swilk⁵ help may fall to be,
 As be this ryddill I will the say,
 Fra the or [I sall] pas away.
 A grene tre fra the rwte wes sawyn,
 And fra it a space wes drawyn,
 As men for till wndyrstand,
 Large thre akyre leynt off land.
 This tre may happyn for to get
 The kynd rwte, and in it be set,
 And sap to recovyr syne
 Bath [the] leyff and flewowre fyne,
 And the froyte the tre oure-sprede.
 Than is to lyppyn⁶ sum remede.'"

¹ law nor loyalty.² haughty.³ likely it was.⁴ whole.⁵ Such.⁶ to be expected.

- Than the knyght sayd, "Now I se
 In-to the kynd rwte set the tre.
 This tre yhe may wnderstand
 To be the kynryk off England
 That in honowre and ryches
 And in gret welth abowndand wes.
 The rwte, yhe trow, kyngys sede
 Quhare-off all kyngis come on dede,
 That awcht¹ the kynryk off England,
 Be lyne and lynage discendand,
 Quhill² Harald, Bastard, and Willame Rede,
 That now in mwld ar lyand dede,
 Off that state interruptyowne.
 Mad be thare intrusyowne.
 Thir ware the akyr-leynthis thre
 That before rehersyd we;
 Ilkane off thir³ wyth thare streynth
 Fychyd⁴ the tre ane akyr-leynth.
 Now gottyn has that tre the rwte
 Off kynd⁵, oure confort and oure bute⁶,
 All lyk to bere bath frwyte and floure
 In-till oure helpe and oure succoure,
 Syne⁷ Saxon and the Scottys blude
 Togyddyr is in yhon frely fwde⁸,
 Dame Mald, our qwene and oure lady,
 Now weddyd wyth oure kyng Henry."
- ¹ owned.
² Till.
³ Each one of these.
⁴ Fetched.
⁵ nature (the native root).
⁶ good.
⁷ Since.
⁸ noble person.

This knyght syttand at the borde
 All this rehers[it] word be word.

The Burial of Henry II. of England.

[David I. founds no fewer than five bishoprics and nine or ten abbeys, and marries the heiress of the Earl of Huntingdon, through whom that earldom is inherited by the Scottish kings. He makes war upon the usurper Stephen in support of the claims of his niece Maud to the English throne, but is defeated in a great battle (Battle of the Standard). The crown of England, however, is settled on Maud's son, afterwards Henry II., and David obtains Northumberland and Cumberland. In this reign the deposed Donald, though blind and emasculate, accomplishes a terrible revenge. Desponding one day on his hard fate, he hears the king's son, "a gangand bairn," go by. He calls to the child, who comes innocently to be kissed, when Donald so handles him that he screams and dies. At this sight the queen, too, suddenly expires, and the succession itself is only saved by the Cæsarean operation. Donald is cast into a dungeon and starved to death. David's remaining son, Prince Henry, Earl of Huntingdon and Northumberland, dying, to the great grief of the kingdom, before his father, that king is succeeded in turn by his grandsons, Malcolm the Maiden and William the Lion. In the reign of the latter monarch Scotland loses all her recent acquisitions. Surprised and captured at Alnwick, William is only freed on condition of relinquishing important possessions and paying homage to Henry. These exactions are considered the greater hardship since William's grandfather David himself knighted Henry at Carlisle, and passing to London, set him on the English throne. Scotland, nevertheless, suffers great depression till the death of the English king. His burial is described.]

Quhen this Henry thus wes dede,
 For to be borne to the sted
 Ordanyd for hys sepulture,
 As suld a dede kyng wyth honwre,
 Hys body oure wes cled all hale
 In honest kyngys aparale;
 Till hys fete fra hys hewyd¹ all downe,
 Hawand thare-on off gold a crowne,
 And gluwys on his handys twa,
 Beltyd wyth his suerd alsua,

¹ head.

¹ Embroidered.

Septyr, [and] ryng, and sandallys
 Browdyn¹ welle on kyngys wys,
 Bot hys visage wes all bare.
 Thus bore wyth lordys that ware thare
 To the sted off hys sepulture
 Wyth gret reverens and honwre.
 Rychard hys swn than and his ayre
 Wyth hys court plesand and rycht fayre
 Than mete hys fadyr on the way.
 Off that dede body, quhare it lay,
 Owt off the nesthryllys twa
 The red blud brystyd owt, that sua
 Fast it bled that all thare-by
 Gangand had thare-off ferly².
 How ilkane kest³ in thaire intent
 Thare wes na certane jwgement,
 Bot lyk it wes be that thyng sene
 That the spyryt wes movyd in tene⁴
 Off the fadyre agayne the swne.
 Yhit nevyrtheles, all to be dwne,
 This Rychard passyd on, gretand sare⁵,
 Wyth lordys that the body bare
 To the sted off the sepulture,
 Quhare it interyd wes wyth honwre.

² marvel.

³ each one cast
 (drew conclu-
 sion).

⁴ anger.

⁵ weeping sore.

⁶ same.

Efftyre tha exeqwyis als fast
 Till Lwndyn this ilk⁶ Rychard past,
 And tuk thi crowne in-to the sted
 Off hys fadyr that thus wes dede.
 Set he Rychard be name wes cald,
 For he a stowt knyght and a bald

Wes in prys¹ off hys renowne.
 Rychard the hart off a lyowne,
 Or Lyownys Hart to say schortly,
 Thai cald this Rychard comownaly.
 Till oure kyng Willame he qwhylum wes²
 Luwyd falow in dedys off prowes;
 For-thi thai war ilkane till othir
 Specyalle, as he had bene his brodyr.

¹ praise.² sometime was.

[With a sum of ten thousand marks (£100,000 sterling) William recovers from Richard all his dignities, estates, and homages, and he renders important assistance to the English king both in setting out for and in returning from his Crusade. For a few chapters further the events of the two countries are narrated together. On the southern side are related the quarrels of King John with church and barons, and the consequent invasion of England and capture of London by Louis, the Dauphin of France. In the north, for his share in these troubles, Alexander II., William the Lion's son, suffers excommunication, and among other matters an account is given of a clan feud between the Besats of Oban and the men of Athole. In 1242 the king and queen with their court are entertained for a night by Sir William Besat at Oban. Next morning the king hastens away to Edinburgh, leaving the queen behind. Four days later she rides to Forfar, attended by Sir William. That night, after attending a tournament at Haddington, Patrick, Earl of Athole, and his company are burnt "to coals" in their lodging. For this deed Besat and his two brothers are blamed. In vain it is shown that on the fatal night Sir William sat late at supper with the queen in Forfar, and led her to her chamber before retiring himself. In vain the queen offers to swear in person to his innocence. In vain Besat himself has the misdoers cursed "wyth buk and bell" in all the kirks of the diocese of Aberdeen, and offers to prove his innocence upon the bodies of his accusers. It is asserted that, wherever he himself might be that night, his arms and men were seen in Haddington, and that the deed was done by the Besats for an ancient feud. Their lands are harried utterly of goods and cattle, and before the fury of the powerful kinsmen of Athole, they are finally banished the kingdom.]

Lament for Alexander III.

[On the death of Alexander II. in 1249, his son Alexander III., eight years of age, is crowned at Scone. A year later he is married to Margaret, daughter of Henry III. of England. Henry intrigues to the prejudice of Scotland, and, at home, struggles occur between the barons of English and Scottish interest for possession of the king. In 1263, however, Alexander has asserted himself, and fights the battle of Largs, where, amid a tempest of "gret weddrys scharpe and snell," the Norse ascendancy over the Western Isles is finally broken. Among further particulars detailed of the time of Alexander III. the right of coining money is confirmed to the Church; Edward I. conquers Wales; and in Dunfermline at the translation of St. Margaret, a miracle happens, her body refusing to be lifted till that of her husband Malcolm has first been removed. Upon the king's death his wise government receives justice at the hands of the poet.]

A thowsand twa hundyr foure score off yhere
 The fyft, fra that the Madyn clere
 Jhesu Cryst oure Lord had borne,
 Alysandyr oure kyng deyde at Kyngorne.
 And enteryd in Dwnfermyne.
 In that collegyd kyrk he lyis
 Hys spyryt in-till paradys.

* afterwards.

* lamented him
 sore.

Scotland menyde hym than full sare²,
 For wndyr hym all his legis ware
 In honoure, qwyete, and in pes,
 For-thi cald PESSYBILL KYNG he wes.
 He honoryd God and Haly Kyrk,
 And medfull dedys he oysyd to wyrk.
 Till all prestys he dyd reverens,
 And sawffyd³ thare statys wyth diligens.
 He [was] stedfast in crystyn fay;

³ preserved.

Relygyows men he honoryde ay.
 He luwyd all men that [war] wertuows;
 He lathyd and chastyd [all] vytyows.
 Be justys he gave and eqwyté
 Till ilke man that his suld be.
 That he mycht noucht till wertu drawe
 He held ay wndyr dowl¹ and awe.
 He gert chasty² mysdoarys
 As lauch wald be thare manerys.
 The lawch he gert be kepyd welle
 In all his kynryk ilka delle.
 He led his lyff in honesté,
 Devotyown, and chastyté.
 Till lordys, knyghtys, and sqwyerys
 That ware plesand off manerys
 He wes lele, luwand, and liberale,
 And all wertuows in governale.
 He wes gret off almows dede³
 Till all that he couth wyt had nede.
 Yhwmen, powere karl, or knawe,
 That wes off mycht an ox til hawe
 He gert that man hawe part in pluche⁴.
 Swa wes corne in [his] land enwche.
 Swa than begowth⁵, and efftyr lang
 Off land wes mesure, ane ox-gang.
 Mychty men, that had ma
 Oxyne, he gert in pluchys ga.
 A pluch of land efftyr that
 To nowmyr⁶ off oxyn mesuryd gat.
 Be that vertu all hys land
 Off corn he gert be abowndand.

¹ fear.² caused chastise.³ deeds of alms.⁴ ploughing.⁵ began.⁶ number.

- ¹ oats. A bolle off atys¹ pennys fourē
² did not exceed. Off Scottys moné past noucht oure²;
 A boll off bere for awcht or ten
 In comowne prys sawld wes then;
 For sextene a boll of qwhete,
 Or for twenty, the derth wes grete.
 This falyhyd fra he deyde suddanly;
³ therefore, *Hz.* This sang wes made off hym for-thi³.
 for this.

[CANTUS.]

- Quhen Alysandyr owre Kyng wes dede,
⁴ law. That Scotland led in luwe and le⁴,
⁵ plenty. Away wes sons⁵ off ale and brede,
 Off wyne and wax, off gamyn and gle.
 Oure gold wes changyd in-to lede.—
 Cryst, borne in-to Vyrghnytté,
 Succoure Scotland and remede,
 That stad [is in] perplexyté.

The Lady Devorgil.

[David and Alexander, the sons of Alexander III., having died childless before their father, and his daughter, married to Eric of Norway, having left only the young Margaret, "the Maid of Norway," Edward I. asks this princess in marriage for his son. She dies, however, before reaching Scotland. The case of the Scottish succession is then stated at great length, John Balliol claiming the throne as grandson of the eldest daughter, and Robert Bruce as son of the youngest daughter of David, brother of William the Lion. The lineal descent of the Comyns is also traced from the dethroned King Donald. A legend like that of the Lady Godiva is related of Maud, queen of Henry I., and a quaint story is told of the mother of Balliol.]

Now to rehers it is my will
 Sum wertws dedis off Derworgill.
 That lady wes, as I herd say,
 Alanys [douchtyr] off Gallway.
 Jhon eldare Ballyoll in his lyffe
 That lady weddyt till his wyff,
 And on hyr syne efftyr that
 Jhon the Ballyoll the kyng he gat.
 Quhen the Ballyoll [at]¹ wes hyr lord
 Spowsyd, as yhe herd record,
 Hys sawle send till his Creature,
 Or he wes layd in sepulture
 Scho gert oppyn his body tyte²,
 And gert his hart be tane owt qwyte³.
 Wyth spycery welle savorand,
 And off kynd welle flevorand,
 That ilke hart than, as men sayd,
 Scho bawmyd, and gert it be layd
 In-till a cophyn off evore⁴
 That scho gert be made tharefore,
 Annamalyd and perfytly dycht⁵,
 Lokyt, and bwndyn wyth sylver brycht.
 And alway quhen scho yhed till mete⁶
 That [cophyne scho gert by hir] sett,
 And till hyr lord, as in presens,
 Ay to that scho dyd reverens.
 And thare scho gert set ilka day,
 [As] wont before hyr lord wes ay,
 All the cowerssys cōweryd welle
 In-to sylver brycht weschelle
 Browcht fra the kychyn and thare set.

¹ that.² quickly.³ had his heart
taken out
whole.⁴ ivory.⁵ Enamelled and
perfectly
polished.⁶ went to meat.

Quhen scho mad hyr to rys, fra met
 All thai courssys scho gert then
 Be tane wp and delt til pure men;
 Scho send all thai courssys gud,
 As scho thame chesyt¹, to ta thare fude.
 This scho cessyt nevyr to do
 Quhill lyvand in this warld wes scho.
 Scho ordanyt in hyre testament
 And gave bydding wyth hale intent
 That that hart thai suld than ta
 And lay it betwene hyr pappys twa,
 As detyt² thai war than wyth honowre
 To lay hyr wyth that in sepulture.

¹ chose.² bound in duty.

Scho fowndyt in-to Gallway
 Off Cystews ordyre ane abbay.
Dulce-Cor scho gert thaim all,
 That is Swet-Hart, that abbay call;
 And now the men off Gallway
 Callys that sted the New Abbay.
 Howssys off freris scho fwndyt tway;
 Wygtowne and Dundee [war] thai.
 In ekyng³ als off Goddis serwyce
 Scho fowndyt in Glasgow twa chapellanyis,
 And in the Universyté
 Off Oxynfurde scho gert be
 A collage fowndyt.* This lady
 Dyd all thir dedis devoutly.

³ enlargement.

* Balliol College.

A bettyr lady than scho wes nane
 In all the yle off Mare Bretane.
 Scho wes rycht plesand off bewté;
 Here wes gret taknys off bownté¹.

¹ token of worth.

The Sack of Berwick.

[Balliol accepts the crown as a vassal of Edward, but presently, resisting the indignities put upon him, is deprived of his honours by the English king. In support of the falling monarch three hundred gentlemen of Fife attack Berwick and carry it at the point of the sword.]

Quhen the Kyng Edward off Inland
 Had herd off this deid full tythand²
 All breme he belyd in-to berth³,
 And wrythyd all in wedand werth⁴,
 Als a kobbyd in his crope⁵
 As he had ettyn ane attyrcope⁶;
 And als fast assemblyd hys ost,
 And come to Berwyk wyth gret bost,
 And layd a sege to the town,
 Assawtis makand rycht fellown⁷.
 The stwff⁸ wythin resystens
 Agayne hym made, and gret deffens.
 Sa qwhene he saw that he mycht noucht
 The town off were⁹ wyn as he thought,
 Wndyr dißsymbolatyown,
 Bath tent thai tuk wp and pawillown,
 All lyk as to gere cese that were;
 Than he removyd wyth his powere,

² tidings.

³ furious he
 blazed into
 wrath.

⁴ in raging state.

⁵ choked in his
 gullet.

⁶ eaten a spider.

⁷ Making right
 fierce assaults.

⁸ garrison.

⁹ by war.

¹ scattered in
ambush.

² Letting pass.

³ knew.

And scalyd in buschementis¹ nere thareby
His ostys, bydand prewally
Owrdrywand² a day or twa.
And qwhill that thai war bydand swa
Thai fenyhyd armys off Scotland
As thai kend³ lordis thai berand;
And ayrly on the Gud Fryday
To the town agayne come thai,
The lordis armys off Scotland
At the sown ryssyng apperand
On bayneris payntyed and penownys.

⁴ gates.

⁵ Cleric and lay.

Wythin the town the Scottis wes
Rejosyd in-till gret blythnes
Off that sycht; for thai wyst noucht
Off the desayt agayne thame wroucht,
Bot thai trowyd that thaire kyng
That ost hade sende in thare helpyng.
For-thi the yhettis⁴ alsa fast
All off the towne thai gert wp cast.
And at thai yhettis oppyn then
Fast thrang [in] the Inglys men,
And wmbeset the Scottis thare
Or thai wyst welle quhat thai ware.
The Inglis [men] thare slwe downe
[All] hale the Scottis natyowne
That wyth-in that towne thai fand,
Off all condytyowne nane sparand;
Leryd and lawde⁵, nwne and frere,
All wes slayne wyth that powere;

Off allkyn state, off allkyn age,
 [Thai] sparyd nothir carl na page;
 Bath awld and yhowng, men and wywys,
 And sowkand barnys thar tynt^r thare lyvys; <sup>r unweaned
infants there
lost.</sup>
 Yhwmen and gentilmen alsa,
 The lyvys all thai tuk [thaim] fra.
 Thare slayne wes downe the floure of Fyffe;
 Thare sawlys to sawff thai spendyt the lyffe,
 And in the sawfté off the town
 Before, thai had the mast renown.

Thus thai slayand ware sa fast
 All the day, qwhill^a at the last ^{a till.}
 This Kyng Edward saw in that tyde
 A woman slayne, and off hyr syde
 A barne he saw fall owt, sprewland
 Besyd that woman slayne lyand.
 "Lasses, Lasses," than cryid he;
 "Leve off, leve off," that word suld be.

Sevyn thowsand and fyve hundyr ware
 Bodyis reknyd that slayne ware thare.
 This dwne wes on the Gud Fryday.
 Off elde na kynd nane sparyd thai.
 Twa dayis owt, as a depe flwde,
 Throw all the town thare ran rede blude.
 Thus that Kyng of Ingland,
 Noucht kyng, bot a fell tyrand,
 Led that day his devotyown.

¹ suffer the passion of death.

² without pity.

He gert¹ thare thole the passyown
 Off dede¹ mony a creature
 In-till gratyous state and pure,
 Clene schrewyn, in gud entent
 Redy to tak thare sacrament.
 Hys offyce wes that Gud Fryday
 Till here innocentis de, and say
 "Allace! allace! now, Lord, we cry,
 For hym that deyde that day, mercy!"
 Nane othir serwys that day herd he,
 Bot gert thame slay on, but peté.²
 The sawlys that he gert slay down thare
 He send quhare his sawle nevyrmare
 Wes lyk to come, that is the blys,
 Quhare alkyn joy ay lestand is.

A Border Tournament.*

[The rise of Sir William Wallace, his victory over the English Treasurer at Stirling Bridge, and his defeat at Falkirk, follow. Edward subdues all south of the Forth, and harries his opponents as far as Perth, "noucht levand behynd bot watty and stane. The three great battles at Roslyn are described, in which in one day twenty thousand English are defeated by Sir John Comyn and Sir Simon Fraser; and Edward's capture of Stirling is narrated. But for the rest of the Wars of Succession the reader of the *Cronykil* is referred to Barbour. On the death of Bruce the regency of Randolph and his shrewd administration of justice are detailed, his policy being to make the sheriff personally responsible for gear stolen in each district. The regent, however, is poisoned at a feast at Wemyss; whereupon Edward Balliol lands at Kinghorn, wins the great battle of Dupplin near Perth, and is crowned at Scone. The wars of the Wardens of Scotland

* The description of this tournament forms part of the MS. interpolated in his narrative by Wyntoun.

against Balliol and Edward III. ensue at great length, the most outstanding episodes of the narrative being the hanging of Sir Alexander Seton's son before the eyes of his father and mother because Seton will not deliver Berwick to the English king earlier than the time agreed, the slaughter of 10,000 Scots at the great battle of Halidon Hill, and the spirited and successful defence of Dunbar by its countess. In this defence it is narrated how, when a boulder from one of Montague's catapults would strike the ramparts,

Wyth a towalle a damyselle
 Arayid jolyly and wellle
 Wipyt the walle, that thai mycht se,
 To gere thaim mare anovid be.

In particular, an illustration of the chivalry of that day is afforded by a description of a great jousting at Berwick in 1338.]

Off Lancastyr Schyr Henry,
That callyd than wes Erle of Derby,
Than wyth the kyng wes rycht prewe.

On Scotlandis marchis trawelyd he
And had gret yharneyng to wyn prys¹.

¹ yearning to
earn praise.

He wes ay worthy, wycht, and wys,
And mast renownyd off bownté,

Off gentrys², and off honesté,

² gentlehood.

That in-till Ingland lywänd was.

He has herd spek how the Dowglas

Throw wyt and wurschipe apertly³

3 boldly.

Dyd mony dowchty jwperty⁴.

4 many doughty enterprises.

He send and askyd thre cours off were

At hym, and he grawntyt it there.

Thai come samyn⁵ at a certane plas.

5 together.

Alysawndyre the Ramsay thare was

Serwänd Dowglas at that justyng,

For he expart wes in-tyll swilk thyng⁶.

6 such things.

The nobill Erle off Derby

Come wyth a joly cumpany.

Sone fra thai hade thair salus made,
 Thai tuk thare rynkis, and samyn rade.
 And at the tothir¹ cours off were
 The Dowglas hit and brak his spere,
 And a sclys off the schafft that brak
 In-till his hand a wounde can mak.
 Tharefore the gud Erle off Derby,
 That saw hym hurt sa fellownly²,
 Wald thole³ hym than to just no mare.
 Bot, or⁴ he tuk his leve to fare,
 He spak till Alysawndyr Ramsay,
 And specyally kan⁵ hym pray
 For to purchas a cumpany,
 That at the lest thai war twenty,
 Off gentill-men wyth scheld and spere,
 To just ilk man thre cows off were;
 And gyve he na had all gentillmen,
 He bad tak knawyn yhwmen then,
 To cum to Berwyk a set day.
 Thare-till grawntyde the Ramsay,
 And sayd that he suld welle purchas
 Cumpany, and cum to that plas,
 Wytth thi⁶ [that] thai all assuryd ware,
 Quhat-evyr than fell at that justyng thare.

¹ second, *the* the other.

² severely.

³ suffer.

⁴ ere.

⁵ began.

⁶ With this (provision).

⁷ quarters.

The Erle thame assuryd willfully,
 Ande the Ramsay in well gret hy
 Gat hym falowys, and at the day
 To Berwyk come, bathe he and thai.
 The Erle ressaywyd thame curtasly,
 And gert delywere thame herbry⁷.

Apon the morne, qwhen that thai ware
 Makand thame bowne¹, hym-selff come thare, ¹ ready.
 And fand all oppyn the entré;
 And noucht-for-thi² thare knockide he ² notwithstanding.
 Wyth-owte the dure all prewally,
 Quhill Ramsay til hym [coym] in hy
 [And] gert hym entre sone. Than he
 Sayd, "God mot at yhoure laykyng be!³" ³ God help your desire.
 Syne said he, "Lordis, on qwhat manere
 Will yhe ryn at this justyng here?"
 Wyth plate scheldis," sayd Ramsay,
 As it afferis⁴ to this play." ⁴ is proper.
 A! syrrys, be oure Lord," sayd he,
 "So suld no man here prysyt be⁵, ⁵ be praised.
 For none till othir mycht do iwill.
 Bot and it likand⁶ ware yhow till ⁶ agreeable.
 As men hostayis for to ryn⁷ ⁷ to run in fashion of war.
 So mycht men prys off wurschype wyne."
 Quod Alysawndyre the Ramsay,
 "It sall lik til ws all, perfay,
 That ilk man ryn his falow till
 In kyrtill allane, gyve that yhe will."
 The Erle sayd than debonarly,
 "Nay, that is all to hard trewly."
 Quod Willame off the Towris than,
 "Schyre, gyve yhe na will, lat ilke man
 Ryn all bare wysage, and yhe
 Qwha [eschewis] fyrst rycht swne sall se."
 The Erle sayde mekilly, "Schyris, nay,
 Yhit that is all to hard, perfay⁸; ⁸ i' faith.
 Bot as I said yhowe will ye do,

Than suld sum prys folow ws to."
 Thaire-to thai gave all thare consent,
 And he furth till his falowys went.

- The justyng lestyd dayis thre,
 1 bold. Qwhare men apert¹ cowrsis mycht se.
 Twa Inglis knychtis thare ware slayne;
 Off Scottis men there deyde nane;
 Bot turnand hamwart be the way
 Off ane hurt endyt Jhone the Hay;
 And Willame the Ramsay wes there
 Borne throw the hewyd wyth a spere,
 And throw the helme wyth strynth off hand,
 2 Till the shaft stayed sticking there.
 3 quickly. Qwhill the trwnsowne [bad] thare stekand².
 Thai browcht a preste till hym belywe³,
 And in his helme he can hym schrywe.
 Than sayd the gud Erle of Derby,
 4 surely. "Lo! heyre a fayre sycht sykkyrly⁴.
 A fayrere sycht how ma man se
 Than knycht or sqwyere, quhethir-evyr he be,
 5 in this fashion. In-till his helme hym thus-gat⁵ schrywe?
 Qwhen I sall pas owt off this lyve
 I wald God off his grace wald send
 To me on swylk manere till end."
 Qwhen he had schrywyn hym, as I say,
 Alysawndyr than the Ramsay
 6 without delay. Gert lay hym down forowtyn lete⁶,
 And on his helme his fute he sete,
 7 wrench. And wyth gret strynth owt can aras⁷
 The trowsown that thare stekand was.
 He rase allane fra it wes owte,

And wyth a gud will and a stowte
 He sayd that he wald [ayl] na-thyng.
 Tharoff the Erle had wonderyng,
 And gretly hym commendit then,
 And sayd, "Lw! stowt hartis off men."

Thus hapnyd till hym off this lame¹.
 And a gud knycht, Patrik the Grame,
 That had traŵellyd beyhond the se
 Till eyk his prys² throw gret bownté,
 He herd spek off this justyng gretly,
 And sped hym thidday in all hy.
 He come thidday on the tothir day³;
 Than Rýchard Talbot can hym pray
 To serwe hym off thre cours off were,
 And he thaim grawntyt but dawngere.
 Sone efftyr samyn can thai ryne⁴.
 The Talbot on had platis twyne⁵,
 And throw thame bath his spere he bare,
 And in the brest ane inch or mare.
 Had he jwstyd as conand was⁶
 He had bene dede in-to that plas.
 Thare coursis haly can thai ma,
 Bot nane had mare harme off thai twa.

¹ on this ground.

² To add to his
praise.

³ second day.

⁴ began to run
together.
⁵ twain.

⁶ as was agreed.

The Talbot syne can hym requere
 To be wyth hym at the supere.
 He assentyt, and qwhen thai were
 Syttand best at the supere
 Thar salute thaim a cumly knycht,

That semyt stowt, bath bald and wycht,
 And amang thare gud wordis there
 At Schyr Patryk three courss off were
 He askyd in-to gud cumpany;

¹ as was meet,
 said smoothly.

And he, as burdand, sayd smethely¹
 "Man, will thow have off me justyng?

Rys up to-morn in the mornyng,

² mass.

And here thi mes² welle, and schrywe the;
 And thow sall sone delyveryt be."

³ no mocking.

He made tharoff na gabbyng³,

For on the morn at the justyng

He bare hym throw the body qwhit

⁴ died of the blow
 very soon.

And he deyt off the dynt welle tyte⁴.

This was upon the thryde day,
 And quhen justyt ilkane had thai
 The haraldis sayd than on this wys,
 That gud ware to gyff the prys,
 On athyre halff to mak thaim mede,
 That bare thame best, for thare gud dede.
 The lordis gawe assent thare-till,
 And ordanyt wyth thaire allaris will⁵
 That Inglis suld the Scottis prys⁶,
 And thai thaim on the samyn wys.

⁵ their common
 consent.

⁶ appraise.

The Inglis men the prys gaffe than
 Till ane that thre halle⁷ courssis ran
 And forowtyn hyt⁸. Bot Scottis men
 Awysit thaim alsamyn then⁹,
 And till the knycht the prys gaue thai
 That smate Wilyame the Ramsay

⁷ entire.

⁸ without hurt.

⁹ Consulted to-
 gether then.

Throw-owte the hede; and a skyl¹
 Thai schawyt till enfors thare-till²,
 And sayd it wes justyng off were,
 And [he] that mast engrewyt³ there
 Suld have the gretast prys, wyth thi⁴
 That he engrewyt honestly.
 The haraldis than can say haly
 The dome wes suthfast and worthy⁵;
 Tharfor sayd ane, "Me-thynk, perfay,
 That he that a knycht yhistyrday
 Slwe, and ane othir to-day, the prys
 Suld have, Patrik the Grame that is.
 For hade the Talbot as taylyd was⁶
 Justyd, he had swelt⁷ in-to that plas.
 As to this prys-gywyng, for-thi,
 I hald hym dede all wtraly."
 On this wys spak the haraldis thare,
 Bot, for the prys wes gywyn are⁸,
 Thai wald repelle it be na way.

¹ reason.² showed to
clinch (their
decision).³ did most vex-
ing.⁴ with this (con-
dition).⁵ true and
gallant.⁶ as was cove-
nanted.⁷ died.⁸ before.

And than the gud Erle can say,
 "I trow it has bene seldyn sene
 That off were justyng thus has bene
 Contenynt⁹ thre dayis, and the prys
 Gywyn as at this jwstyng is."
 He festaid the jwstarys that day,
 That on the morne syne held thaire way.

⁹ Conducted.

[By the efforts of Douglas, Ramsay, and the Warden, Robert Stewart, the English ascendancy is gradually overcome, and David II. is brought home from France, whither he had been sent. Presently, however, at the request of the French king, he invades England, and with several of his nobles is taken prisoner

at the battle of Durham. In 1349 the "first pestilence" destroys a third of the population of Scotland. On the death of David II. the crown passes to the Stewarts in the person of Robert II. The growth of friendly relations with France is narrated, the bond of union being the common hostility to England. In a long narrative of Border warfare the most conspicuous event is the defeat and capture of Percy at Otterbourne. Several tournaments in France and England are described, as well as the fight between Clan Chattan and Clan Quhele ("the thretty for thretty") in barriers before the king at Perth. Then follow the dethronement of Richard of England by Henry IV., and the cruel death at Falkland of the son of Robert III., David, Duke of Rothesay,

Cunnand in-to litterature

A seymly persone in stature.

At Homildon in 1402, Murdoch Stewart and the Earl of Douglas are defeated by Percy with great loss. Douglas, taken prisoner, is made to join Percy in the battle against Henry IV. at Shrewsbury. The circumstances are detailed of the seizure at sea by the English of Robert's remaining son, Prince James. Robert III. dies at Dundonald, and during the ensuing regency of the Duke of Albany the chronicle ends with the expedition into Flanders of Scottish knights errant under the Earl of Mar.]

HENRY THE MINSTREL.

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HENRY THE MINSTREL.

ALTHOUGH a new fashion had been set for the more polite poetry of Scotland by the example of King James I. in the early part of the fifteenth century, much of the popular verse of the country continued to flow in the older channels. Of this there exist several specimens. Besides popular ballads like *The Battle of Harlaw*,¹ which was probably composed soon after the event which it celebrates, in 1411, there remain such compositions as *The Howlat, or The Danger of Pride*,² a long moral fable in the obscure style of *Gawen and Gologras*, supposed to have been written about 1450 by Sir Richard Holland, a partizan of the house of Douglas; and a curious rugged performance in various measures, called *Cockelbie's Sow*,³ conveying in a vein of quaint rustic humour a recommendation of such virtues as almsgiving and economy.

But by far the best and most important of all these compositions is the great popular epic of the people's

¹ Printed in Ramsay's "Evergreen."

² Pinkerton's "Ancient Scottish Poems."

³ Laing's "Select Remains of the Ancient Popular Poetry of Scotland."

hero, *The Actis and Deidis of the Illustere and Vailyeand Campioun, Schir William Wallace, Knight of Ellerslie*. Here, in flowing minstrel verse, not without fire and a certain heroic ring, is preserved an example, perhaps the last, of the bardic narratives which, chanted in hall and hostelrie, stirred the blood and regaled the time in Scotland in the long rush-lit evenings of the fifteenth century. And here, coloured somewhat perhaps by the two hundred years of interval between subject and singer, but not the less interesting on that account, remains the great store of fact and legend concerning the knight who, short as was his career and cruel as was his fate, struck the blow which wakened Scotland to life.

Of the author of the poem, Henry the Minstrel, or "Blind Harry," as from his infirmity he used to be popularly called, very little has been recorded. John Mair, who was born about 1454, mentions him in his history. "In the time of my infancy," he says, "Henry, a man blind from his birth, composed the whole *Book of William Wallace*, and committed to writing in vernacular poetry, in which he was skilled, the things which were commonly related. I, however, give only partial credit to such writings. By the recitation of these stories in the presence of men of foremost rank he procured food and clothing, of which he was worthy." Of himself the poet says, "It is weill knawin I am a bural (rustic) man;" and more than once he deprecates criticism on account of his situation. Near the end of the last book he says :

All worthi men at redys this rurall dyt
Blaym nocht the buk, set I be wnperfyt.

I suld hawe thank sen I nocht trawail spard;
For my laubour na man hecht me reward;
Na charge I had off king nor othir lord;
Gret harm I thocht his gud deid suld be smord.
I haiff said her ner as the process gais,
And fenyeid nocht for frendship nor for fais.
Costis herfor was no man bond to me;
In this sentence I had na will to be.

Further, in the Treasury accounts of James IV. there appear several entries of gratuities to Henry. The last of these entries occurs in January, 1492, and it is supposed, therefore, that he died before the end of the century.

Nothing more is known of the poet's life. Of his character it is only possible to read something between the lines of his work. There a rough, uncompromising patriot is seen, honestly anxious to exalt the national hero, and bitter as a man of limited knowledge, circumscribed by his blindness and the spirit of his time, was likely to be against his country's enemies.

As with the *King's Quair*, a single manuscript has transmitted the Minstrel's work to modern times. It is bound up with the MS. of Barbour's *Bruce*, written by the same scribe, John Ramsay, in 1488, and preserved in the Advocates' Library. Set down during the poet's lifetime, this copy is likely to be fairly correct, though there are some ten or twelve lines throughout the work which are hardly intelligible. The Minstrel's inability to put his own composition on paper would sufficiently account for more than these. Of printed editions the earliest

known is that of 1570 by "Robert Lekprevik at the Expensis of Henrie Charteris," of which only one copy is known to exist (in the British Museum). There have been many later editions, but the best are one of Perth in 1790, Dr. Jamieson's in 1820, and one for the Scottish Text Society by Mr. James Moir in 1885.

The poem is divided into eleven books, and is written in the ten-syllable line rhyming in couplets, which had been wrought to great perfection by Chaucer, and has since been accorded the title of heroic verse.

Beyond an allusion or two to "Ector of Troy" and the like, which were probably the common stock of minstrels of his time, the poet does not display an acquaintance with the ancient classics. On the other hand he seems to have studied not only the style, but the sentiment and even the structure of the romances of chivalry which still at that period formed a large part of minstrel entertainment. Many of the expressions which he uses appear to be borrowed directly from these models. Phrases like "Wapynnys stiff of steill," and "In armys sone he coucht that queyn with croun," strike as a direct echo from poems like *Sir Tristrem*. The ellipses, too, which are his constant habit, find a parallel in such work as the Rhymer's. It need not be marvelled at, therefore, if the influence of these romance models made itself further felt, and if the Minstrel sought to run the half-legendary incidents of his hero's life themselves into the conventional mould. The historical credit due

to Henry's *Wallace* has been debated by nearly every editor who has undertaken the reproduction of the poem, but by none does this romance influence appear to have been taken into sufficient consideration. Henry declares in his work that he got his materials from a Latin history of the hero written by John Blair, Wallace's own schoolfellow and chaplain; and from frequent references throughout the poem the existence of such a work seems beyond doubt. In the tenth book, after recording a fight with the pirate, John of Lynn, in which Blair acted a valiant part, the Minstrel adds:

Bot maister Blayr spak nothing off himsell
In deid off armes quhat awentur he fell;
Schir Thomas Gray, was than preyst to Wallace,
Put in the buk how than hapnyt this cace.

The character of Blair's history itself cannot now be judged. Sir Robert Sibbald, indeed, published a work, *Relationes Arnaldi Blair*; but this has been shown to be a mere series of extracts from the *Scotichronicon*. In any case, however, it is reasonable to believe that with the materials of Blair's history Henry inwove the legends of Wallace current in his own time. The knight of Ellerslie, to be a leader at all in those days, must have been a man of immense physical strength; but the superhuman feats occasionally attributed to him by the poet are beyond reasonable belief, and can only be accounted for by the understanding that they were owed to popular tradition, which in two hundred years had had time to magnify the hero's deeds. It is not probable and

hardly possible that some of these stories—episodes in which whole troops are mowed down by the single arm of Wallace—could be derived as they stand from the sober contemporary record of an eye-witness like the chaplain. Henry on his last page confesses regarding at least one episode :

Thir twa gert me say that ane othir wyss ;
Till Maister Blayr we did sumpart off dispyss.

The fact appears to be that in the Minstrel's time Wallace had already become a half-mythical figure round whose deeds the national imagination had gathered a literature of legend. Wyntoun said of him half a century before the Minstrel sang :

Off his gud dedis and manhad
Gret gestis I hard say ar made,
Bot sa mony, I trow noucht,
As he in-till hys dayis wroucht.
Quha all hys dedis of prys wald dyte
Hym worthyt a gret buk to wryte.

It may therefore be supposed that Henry had sufficient latitude for additional episodes in the popular legends and "gret gestis" extant regarding the hero. Such a character was in much the same position to his chronicler as King Arthur and Charlemagne had been to the minstrels of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and was likely to find something of the same treatment. Thus it is found that Henry's poem, besides much which was probable enough, and much which is proved to be historical by contemporary records, contains certain elements which could have no foundation in fact, but which were deemed indispensable to a hero of romance.

Of this sort is the episode of Wallace's interview with the English queen. Love as well as war was a necessary element of a minstrel's tale. It was not enough that the forces of the enemy should be defeated at Stirling Bridge and the great national purpose of the Liberator accomplished; it was necessary that that enemy should be personally humbled, and that even his wife's allegiance should become part of the spoils of the victor. Henry accordingly marches his hero south to the gates of London, where King Edward, driven to his last stronghold, and reduced to abject despair, is only saved at last by the intercession of his queen in the conqueror's camp. All this is romantic enough, and, like many other episodes throughout the poem, affords a sufficiently dramatic situation. But it is not to be read as history. Edward was at that particular time engaged in the French wars in Flanders, and though the Scottish forces, after clearing their enemies out of the northern kingdom, proceeded to lay utterly waste the provinces of Northumberland and Cumberland, it is not known that they passed further south. Other episodes of the poem as well, such as the opening battle of Biggar in which the hero is made to defeat Edward in person, are also obviously apocryphal; and the conclusion to which these compel the reader is that the composition as a whole must be regarded simply as a national romance founded upon popular tradition.

At the same time it may be as well to remember that within the last few decades several of Henry's episodes, such as the expedition of Wallace to France,

formerly supposed to be fictitious, have been confirmed by discovery of authentic evidence.

For the actually ascertained facts of the hero's life the reader may be referred to the volume of "Documents Illustrative of Sir William Wallace, his Life and Times," edited for the Maitland Club by Mr. Robert Roger; and also to the admirable article on Wallace in the "Encyclopædia Britannica." From these it will be seen that though the Scottish Warden did not carry out all the enterprises attributed to him by Henry the Minstrel, he was by no means the mere robber and brigand which he was painted by Hemingford and the other English chroniclers of his time. It is significant of his enduring greatness that everywhere throughout Scotland to the present day there are places honoured for his memory. His name is, as Wordsworth says,

To be found, like a wild flower,
All over his dear Country.

In one respect at least the Minstrel's poem remains historically valuable. It affords an illustration of the state of national feeling in Henry's own time.

If from no more than a poetical point of view, however, the composition must continue to be regarded as a monumental work. There cannot but be something intrinsically worth study in a poem which, notwithstanding the disadvantage of its author's blindness from his birth, has remained uninterruptedly popular for centuries. Debarred by his infirmity from a field in which the Scottish poets especially excelled—the description of colour and natural scenery—the Minstrel displays a rude

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fire and energy and a power of realizing the telling points of action and situation beyond any of his predecessors. In a word, he possessed to a greater degree the modern spirit of romantic art. His hero, it is true, appears to lack the high-bred chivalry and polity of the Bruce as portrayed by Barbour, and displays at times an implacable ferocity which it is to be hoped did not belong to the actual character of the Liberator; while the Englishmen of the poem too commonly justify the description of Dr. Merry Ross—"mere poltroons or braggarts or felons." The temper of the Minstrel's work altogether is on a level with the temper of the common people of his time, from whom he sprang. But not the less is the *Wallace* equal to its great poetic purpose, bodying forth with broad master-strokes the tyranny which had burned its way to the passionate heart of the nation, and picturing the uprising of that national heart in the person of its early hero, uncertain in action at first, and with human desires and failings, till, stung by a crowning wrong, he grasps the weapons to his hands, hurls forth his defiance, and begins the struggle for liberty or death.

It is not impossible to understand the effect of these verses chanted to a warlike audience by the blind old Scottish Homer of the fifteenth century, recalling with vivid force, as they must have done, the heroic movement of the past, and awakening for a time again perhaps the embers of an ancient patriotism amid the miserable intestine bickerings of the reign of James the Third. The effect of the poem on a

Scottish mind, even in a later day, may be judged from the words of Robert Burns, who only knew the Minstrel's work through the paraphrase into modern Scottish by William Hamilton of Gilbertfield. "The story of Wallace," he says in his letter to Dr. Moore, "poured a tide of Scottish prejudice into my veins which will boil along there till the flood-gates of life shut in eternal rest."

SIR WILLIAM WALLACE.

[The poem opens with a complaint that the Scots forget their noble ancestors, and do honour only to their enemies. The descent of Wallace is traced and Edward's oppression briefly recounted. As a youth visiting Dundee, Wallace is insulted by the son of Selby the governor, and slays him in the street. The house in which he takes refuge is searched, but, dressed as a maid at the spinning-wheel, the hero is overlooked. Flying home to Ellerslie he finds his father and elder brother slain; and his mother, fearful for the safety of her remaining son, sends him to his uncle, Sir Richard Wallace of Ricardton. But presently, fishing one day in Irvine Water, he is attacked by some English men-at-arms, who attempt to carry off his fish, and he slays three of them. Visiting Ayr, and venturing to defend his uncle's servant, he is overpowered and cast into prison, but soon, taken for dead, is thrown over the castle wall. His nurse begs his body and carries him to her house, where he is revived with milk from her daughter's breast. Thomas the Rhymmer, staying at hand with the minister, on hearing this news, prophesies the great future of Wallace. Gathering some friends, the hero waylays Lord Percy's succours at Loudon Hill, routs them, and slays their leader Fenwick, who had been the elder Wallace's murderer. Known presently as a champion of the Scottish cause, Wallace finds himself at the head of a considerable band of followers, and makes his way northwards, taking Gargunnoch Peel and the castle of Kincleven. At Perth, in an amorous adventure, he narrowly escapes capture.]

A Love Adventure.



HAN Wallace said he wald go to the toun,
Arayit him weill in-till a preistlik gown;
In Sanct Jhonstoun* disgysyt can he fair,
Till this woman the quhilk I spak of ayr[†].

[†] whom I spake
of formerly.

* The ancient name of Perth.

- Off his presence scho rycht reiosit was ;
¹ afraid. And sor adred¹ how he away suld pass.
 He soiornt thar fra nowne was of the day
 Quhill ner the nycht, or that he went away.
² made appoint- He trystyt² hyr quhen he wald cum agayne,
 ment with. On the thrid day ; than was scho wondyr fayne.
³ went. Yhett he was seyn with enemyss as he yeid³ ;
 To Schyr Garraid thai tald off all his deid,
⁴ been revenged. And to Butler, that wald haiff wrokyn beyne⁴.
⁵ beautiful. Than thai gart tak that woman brycht and scheyne⁵,
 Accusyt hir sar of resset in that cas.
⁶ Many times. Feyll syis⁶ scho suour that scho knew nocht Wallas.
⁷ know. Than Butler said, " We wait⁷ weyle it was he ;
 And bot thou tell, in bayle fyre sall thou de.
 Giff thou will help to bryng yon rebell doune
 We sall the mak a lady off renoun."
 Thai gaiff till hyr baith gold and siluer brycht ;
 And said scho suld be weddyt with ane knycht
⁸ without. Quham scho desirit, that was but⁸ mariage.
 Thus tempt thai hir, throu consaill and gret wage,
 That scho thaim tald quhat tyme he wald be thar.
 Than war thai glad ; for thai desirit no mar
 Off all Scotland, bot Wallace at thair will.
 Thus ordaynyt thai this poyntment to fullfill.
⁹ made ready. Feyle men off armes thai graithit⁹ hastelye
¹⁰ gates. To kepe the yettis¹⁰, wicht Wallas till aspye.
 At the set trist he entrit in the toune,
¹¹ knowing. Wittand¹¹ no-thing of all this falss tresoune.
¹² without more Till hir chawmer he went but mair abaid¹².
 delay. Scho welcumyt him, and full gret plesance maid.
¹³ readily. Quhat at thai wrocht I can nocht graithly¹³ say ;

Rycht wnperryt I am of Venus play :
 Bot hastelye he graithit him to gang.
 Than scho him tuk, and speryt giff he thocht lang¹; ² asked if he felt
 Scho askit him that nycht with hir to bid. ^{weary.}
 Sone he said, "Nay, for chance that may betide ;
 My men ar left all at mysrewill for me.
 I may nocht sleipe this nycht quhill I thaim se."
 Than wepyt scho, and said full oft, "Allace
 That I was maide, wa worthe the coursit cas³! ⁴ woe befall the
 Now haiff I lost the best man leiffand is. ^{accursed}
 O feble mynd, to do so foull a myss⁵! ^{chance.}
 O waryit witt, wykkyt and variance⁶, ⁷ fault.
 That me has brocht in-to this myschefull⁸ chance! ⁸ O cursed craft
 Allace," scho said, "in warld that I was wrocht, ^{and unjust}
 Giff all this payne on my-self mycht be brocht! ^{adjoining.}
 I haiff seruit to be brynt in a gleid⁹." ⁹ unhappy.
 Quhen Wallace saw scho ner of witt couth weid¹⁰, ¹⁰ a bright fire.
 In his armes he caught hir sobrelly, ¹¹ with thought
 And said, "Der hart, quha has mysdoyne ocht, I?" ^{would fever.}
 "Nay, I," quoth scho, "has falslye wrocht this trayn.
 I haiff you sald; rycht now yhe will be slayn."
 Scho tauld [to] him hir tresoun till ane end,
 As I haiff said; quhat nedis mair legend?
 At hir he speryt giff scho forthocht it sar¹². ¹² repented it sore.
 "Wa, ya," scho said, "and sall do euirmar.
 My waryed werd¹³ in warld I mon fullfill; ¹³ accursed fate.
 To mend this myss I wald byrne on a hill."
 He comfort hir, and baide hir haiff no dreide,
 "I will," he said, "haiff sumpart off thi weid."
 Hir gowne he tuk on hym, and courches als¹⁴. ¹⁴ kerchief also.
 "Will God, I sall eschape this tresoune fals.

I the forgyff." With-outyn wordis mair
 He kissyt hyr, syne tuk his leiff to fayr.
 Hys burly brand that helpyt him offt in neid,
 Rycht priwalye he hid it wndyr that weid.
 To the south yett the gaynest¹ way he drew ;
 Quhar that he fand off armyt men enew.
 To thaim he tald, dissemblyt [in] contenance ;
 "To the chawmer, quhar he was vpon chance,
 Speid fast," he said, "Wallace is lokit in."
 Fra him thai socht with-outyn noyis or dyn
 To that sammyn houss ; about thai can thaim cast.
 Out at the yett [than] Wallas gat full fast,
 Rycht glaid in hart ; quhen that he was with-out
 Rycht fast he yeide, a stour² pais and a stout.
 Twa him beheld, and said, "We will go se ;
 A stalwart queyne, forsuth, yon semyss to be."
 Him thai folowit throwe the South Ynche thai twa.
 Quhen Wallace saw with thaim thar come na ma
 Agayne he turnede, and has the formast slayn.
 The tothir fled ; than Wallas, with gret mayn,
 Vpon the hed with his suerd has him tayne ;
 Left thaim bathe dede, syne to the strenth is gayne.
 His men he gat, rycht glaid quhen thai him saw ;
 Till thair defens in haist he gart³ thaim draw ;
 Deuoydyde him sone of the womannys weid :
 Thus chapyt he out of that felloun dreid⁴.

¹ nearest.² swift.³ caused.⁴ extremedanger.

An Apparition in Gask Hall.

[As the little Scottish company, pursued by the English garrison of Perth with a bloodhound, are making for the Forest of Gask, Fawdoun, a suspected traitor, declares he can go no further. Wallace, to prevent treachery, strikes off his head. The hound stops at the blood, and while the stars are shining the fugitives reach their retreat.]

As Wallace thus in the thik forrest socht,
 Threttene war left with him, no ma had he.
 In the Gask hall thair luyng haif thai tayne;
 Fyr gat thai sone, bot meyt than had thai nane.
 Twa scheipe thai tuk besid thaim of a fauld,
 Ordanyt to soupe in-to that ssembly hauld.
 Graithit in haist sum fude for thaim to dycht¹,
 So hard thai blaw rude hornys wpon hycht².
 Twa sende he furth to luk quhat it mycht be.
 Thai baid rycht lang, and no tithingis herd he,
 Bot boustous³ noyis so brymly⁴ blowand fast.
 So othir twa in-to the woode furth past.
 Nane come agayne, bot boustously can blaw.
 In-to gret ire he send thaim furth on raw⁵.
 Quhen he allayne Wallace was lewynt thar
 The awfull blast aboundyt mekill mayr⁶.
 Than trowit he weill thai had his luyng seyne;
 His suerd he drew of nobill mettall keyne,
 Syn furth he went quhar at he hard the horne.
 With-out the dur Fawdoun was him beforne,
 As till his sycht, his awne hed in his hand.
 A croys he maid quhen he saw him so stand.
 At Wallace in the hed he swaket⁷ thar;
 And he in haist sone hynt⁸ [it] by the hair,

¹ prepare.² on high.³ tremendous.
⁴ fiercely.⁵ in rank.⁶ much more.⁷ hurled.⁸ laid hold of.

- Syne out agayne at him he couth it cast.
 In-till his hart he was gretlye agast.
 Rycht weill he trowit that was no spreit of man ;
 1 that such. It was sum dewill at sic¹ malice began.
 2 advantage. He wyst no waill² thar langar for to bide ;
 3 rent in twain. Vp through the hall thus wicht Wallace can glid,
 4 dwelling. Till a closs stair ; the burdis raiff in twyne³,
 Fyftene fute large he lap out of that in⁴.
 Wp the wattir sodeynlye he couth fair.
 5 glanced. Agayne he blent⁵ quhat perance he saw thair.
 Him thocht he saw Faudoun, that hugly syr ;
 That haill hall he had set in a fyr ;
 A gret raftre he had in-till his hand.
 Wallace as than no langar walde he stand.
 Off his gud men full gret meruail had he,
 6 lost. How thai war tynt⁶ through his feyle⁷ fantasé.
 7 strong. Traistis rycht weill all this was suth⁸ in deide,
 8 true. Supposs⁹ that it no poynt be of the creide.

9 Although.

[He escapes through his enemies with great difficulty, fighting nearly all the way, and, swimming the Forth at Cambuskenneth, finds refuge in the Torwood. He sends back a woman to survey the scene of the previous night, and he is joined by his uncle.]

- In the Torwode thai lugyt all that nycht,
 Quhill the woman that Wallace north had send
 Retornd agayne, and tald him till ane end
 Quhat Inglissmen in the way scho fand dede.
 10 Many. Feyll¹⁰ was fallyn fey¹¹ in mony syndry stede ;
 11 at point of death. The hors scho saw that Wallace had berefft,
 And the Gask hall standand as it was left,
 12 stirred. With-out harme, nocht sterd¹² off it a stane ;
 Bot off his men gud tithingis scho gat nane.

[Visiting Lanark, Wallace becomes enamoured of a young lady, the orphan daughter of Hew Braidfute of Lamington, but defers marriage till Scotland shall be free. Shortly afterwards, while the hero and his men are attending mass at Lochmaben, the English cut the tails from their horses. In the fight that ensues the English are defeated, and, Wallace being joined by Sir John the Graham, Lochmaben and Crawford castles are taken. A little later, seized with resistless love-longing, Wallace weds Marion Braidfute, and they live together until a daughter is born. But in 1297, for aiding her husband's escape from a street brawl in Lanark, the lady is put to death. At the news, Wallace is overwhelmed with grief, but presently vows implacable vengeance. He storms Lanark at midnight; puts his enemies to the sword, and shortly finds himself at the head of an army. So serious appears the rising that King Edward himself with a great force comes to Scotland. He is defeated, however, in two great battles at Biggar, and in consequence at "Forest Kyrk" Wallace is chosen Warden of the country. Edward seeks peace, and a truce of a year is agreed on. In two months this truce is broken by English treachery at the terrible "Barns of Ayr," where eighteen score Scottish gentlemen, invited to a justice ayre, and admitted two by two, are hanged to the rafters. Wallace, who meanwhile has seen a vision of his future in a dream in Monkton Kirk, is only saved by a chance delay and the warning of a woman. He avenges the treachery by burning five thousand English in their inns at Ayr on the same night. This was at ten at night. By nine next morning he is in Glasgow, where a similar justice ayre is appointed to be held, and routs Earl Percy and Bishop Beck. Called then to the help of Campbell of Lochow, he defeats and slays Macfadyen, Edward's creature in the west, in a pass under Ben More. Meanwhile Malcolm, Earl of Lennox, has taken Stirling for Wallace, and the latter, after holding a counsel at Ardochattan, captures Perth and Dunottar.]

The Battle of Stirling Bridge.

[Wallace burns a hundred English ships at Aberdeen, and all the north falls to his hand. He is besieging Dundee when, alarmed at the news, King Edward sends a large force into Scotland under Warenne and Cressingham with orders to wait his own coming at Stirling.]

Thar mustir than was awfull for to se.
 Off fechtand men thousandis thai war sexté
 To Stirlyng past, or thai likit to bid.

To erll Malcome a sege thai laid that tid,
 And thocht to kep the commaund off thar king.
 Bot gud Wallace wrocht for ane-othir thing.
 Dundé he left, and maid a gud chyftane,
 With twa thousand, to kepe that hous off stayne,
 Off Angwis men and duellaris off Dundé;
 The samyn nycht till Sanct Jhonstoun went he.
 Apon the morn till Schirreff-mur he raid;
 And thar a quhill in gud aray thai baid.

¹ capable.

Schir Jhon the Grayme, and Ramsay that was wicht¹,
 He said to thaim, "This is my purpos rycht;

² Too much.

Our mekill² it is to proffer thaim battaill

³ advantage.

Apon a playne feild; bot we haiff sum awaill³."

Schir Jhon the Grayme said, 'We haiff wndirtayn,
 With less power, sic thing that weill is gayn.'

Than Wallace said, "Quhar sic thing cummys off
 neid,

We suld thank God that makis ws for to speid.

Bot ner the bryg my purpos is to be,

And wyrk for thaim sum suttell jeperté."

Ramsay ansuerd, 'The brig we may kepe weill;

⁴ knowledge.

Off way about Sotheroun has litill feill⁴.'

Wallace sent Jop the battaill for to set,

⁵ without fail.

The Twysday next to fecht with-outyn let⁵.

On Setterday on to the bryg thai raid,

⁶ compactly.

Off gud playne burd was weill and junctly⁶ maid;

⁷ Caused watches
to see to it.

Gert wachis wait⁷ that nane suld fra thaim pass.

A wricht he tuk, the suttellast at thar was,

And ordand him to saw the burd in twa

Be the myd streit, that nane mycht our it ga;

⁸ jointed bands,
i.e., strong
hinges.

On charnaill bandis⁸ nald it full fast and sone,

Syne fyld¹ with clay as na-thing had beyne done.
 The tothir end he ordand for to be,
 How it suld stand on thre rowaris² off tre,
 Quhen ane war out, that the laiff doun suld fall.
 Him-self wndyr he ordand thar with-all,
 Bownd on the trest³ in a creddill to sit,
 To lous the pyne quhen Wallace leit him witt.
 Bot with a horn, quhen it was tyme to be,
 In all the ost suld no man blaw bot he.

¹ Afterwards soiled.² bolts.³ beam, trestle.

The day approchit off the gret battaill;
 The Inglismen for power wald nocht fail.
 Ay sex thai war agayne ane off Wallace;
 Fyfty thousand maid thaim to battaill place.
 The ramaynand baid at the castell still;
 Baithe feild and hous thai thocht to tak at will.
 The worthi Scottis, apoun the tothir side,
 The playne feild tuk, on fute maid thaim to bid.
 Hew Kertyngayme the wantgard ledis he,
 With twenty thousand off likly men to se.
 Thretty thousand the erll off Waran had;
 Bot he did than as the wysman him bad;
 All the fyrst ost befor him our was send⁴.
 Sum Scottis men that weill the maner kend⁵
 Bade Wallace blaw, and said thai war enew.
 He haistyt nocht, bot sadly⁶ couth persew,
 Quhill Warans ost thik on the bryg he saw.
 Fra Jop the horn he hyntyt and couth blaw
 Sa asprely⁷, and warned gud Jhon Wricht.
 The rowar out he straik with gret slycht;
 The laiff⁸ yeid doun, quhen the pynnys out gais.

⁴ was sent over.⁵ knew.⁶ wisely, firmly.⁷ shrilly.⁸ The remainder.

A hidwys cry amang the peple rais ;
 Bathe hors and men in-to the wattir fell.
 The hardy Scottis, that wald na langar duell,
 Set on the laiff with strakis sad and sar,

¹ Assured of them that were over. Off thaim thar our as than souerit¹ thai war.

² At the forefront they essayed. At the forbreist thai prewit² hardely,

Wallace and Grayme, Boid, Ramsay, and Lundy,

³ struggle. All in the stour³ fast fechtand face to face.

The Sotheron ost bak rerit off that place

⁴ That. At⁴ thai fyrst tuk, fyve akyr breid and mar.

Wallace on fute a gret scharp sper he bar ;

Amang the thickest off the press he gais.

On Kertyngaym a straik chosyn he hais

⁵ corselet. In the byrnes⁵, that polyst was full brycht.

⁶ sharp, penetrating. The punyeand⁶ hed the plattis persyt rycht,

Throuch the body stekit him but reskew ;

⁷ Boldly. Derffly⁷ to dede that chyftane was adew⁸.

⁸ done.

Baithe man and hors at that strak he bar doun.

⁹ prepared. The Inglis ost quhilk war in battaill boun⁹,

Comfort thai lost quhen thair chyftayne was slayn ;

And mony ane to fle began in playne.

Yeit worthi men baid still in-to the sted,

Quhill ten thousand was brocht on-to thair dede.

Than fled the laiff, and mycht no langar bid ;

Succour thai socht on mony diuers sid,

Sum est, sum west, and sum fled to the north.

¹⁰ Over seven thousand at once splashed. Sewyn thousand large at anys flotttryt¹⁰ in Forth,

Plungyt the depe, and drownd with-out mercye ;

¹¹ immense following. Nayne left on lyff off all that feill menyhe¹¹.

¹² avail, consequence. Off Wallace ost na man was slayne off waill¹²,

Bot Androw Murray, in-to that strang battaill.

The south part than, saw at thar men was tynt¹,
 Als fersly fled as fyr dois off the flynt.
 The place thai left, castell, and Stirlyng toune;
 Towart Dunbar in gret haist maid thaim boune.

Quhen Wallace ost had won that feild throuch mycht,
 Tuk wp the bryg, and loussit gud Jhone Wricht;
 On the flearis syne folowed wondyr fast.
 Erl Malcom als out off the castell past,
 With Lennox men, to stuff² the chace gud speid.
 Ay be the way thai gert feill³ Sotheroun bleid;
 In the Torwod thai gert full mony de.
 The erll off Waran, that can full fersly fle,
 With Corspatrik, that graithly⁴ was his gyd,
 On changit hors throuch-out the land thai rid,
 Strawcht to Dunbar; bot few with thaim thai led.
 Mony was slayne our sleuthfully at fled.
 The Scottis hors that had rown wondyr lang,
 Mony gaiff our, that mycht no forthyr gang.
 Wallace and Grayme euir to-giddy baid;
 At Hathyntoun full gret slauchtir thai maid
 Off Inglismen, quhen thair hors tyrt had.
 Quhen Ramsay come gud Wallace was full glad;
 With him was Boid, and Richard off Lundy,
 Thre thousand haill⁵ was off gud chewalry;
 And Adam als Wallace off Ricardtoun,
 With erll Malcome, thai fand at Hathyntoun.
 The Scottis men on slauchtir taryt was⁶,
 Quhill to Dunbar the twa chyftanys couth pass,
 Full sitfully⁷, for thar gret contrar cas⁸.
 Wallace folowed till thai gat in that place.

¹ lost.² supply.³ caused many.⁴ readily.⁵ whole, quite.⁶ were restrained.⁷ sorrowfully.⁸ hap.

Off thair best men, and Kertyngaym off renoune,
 Twenty thousand was dede but redemptioun.
 Besyd Beltoun Wallace raturnd agayn;
 To folow mar as than was bot in wayn.

Wallace and the Queen of England.

[Wallace summons a parliament at Perth, but Corspatrick, Earl of March, refuses to attend, flouting the Warden as a "king of Kyle." In consequence Wallace at Dunbar attacks and routs the haughty noble. The latter is reinforced by a large army from England under Bruce and Bishop Beck, but this also is discomfited by the enterprise of the Scots, though it grieves the leader to find his king fighting among the national enemies. To recoup the nation's losses Wallace next determines on an invasion of England, and the poet makes him march south, burning and slaying, and continually evaded by the English king, as far as St. Albans. The English barons determine to sue for peace, but, mindful of the ruthlessness of the Warden, no herald will venture to his camp. At last the queen offers to go. The Scottish leader wakens early in his tent.]

The mery day sprang fra the oryent,
 With bemys brycht enlumynyt the occident.
 Eftir Titan, Phebus wp rysyt fayr,
 Heich in the sper the signes maid declayr.
 Zepherus began his morow cours,

¹ rises again.

The swete wapour thus fra the ground resours¹.

² humble, gentle.
³ descends.

The humyll² breyth down fra the hewyn awaill³,

In euery meide, bathe fyrth, forrest, and daill;

⁴ note.

The cler rede⁴ among the rochis rang

Throuch greyn branchis quhar byrdis blythly sang

With joyus woice in hewynly armony.

Than Wallace thocht it was no tyme to ly;

He croyssit him, syne sodeynli wp rais;

To tak the ayr out off his palyon¹ gais.
 Maister Jhon Blar was redy to rawess;
 In gud entent syne bownyt to the mess².
 Quhen it was done Wallace can him aray³
 In his armour quhilk gudly was and gay.
 His schenand schoys⁴ that burnyst was full beyn⁵,
 His leg harnes he clappyt on so clene;
 Pullane greis⁶ he braissit on full fast;
 A closs byrny with mony sekyr⁷ clasp;
 Breyst-plait, brasaris⁸, that worthy was in wer.
 Besid him furth Jop couth his basnet ber.
 His glytterand glowis grawin on athir sid,
 He semyt weill in battaill till abid.
 His gud gyrdyll, and syne his burly brand,
 A staff off steyll he gryppyt in his hand.
 The ost him blyst, and prayit God off his grace
 Him to conwoy fra all mystymyt cace⁹.
 Adam Wallace and Boid furth with him yeid
 By a reuir, throu-out a floryst meid.
 And as thai walk atour¹⁰ the feyldis greyn,
 Out off the south thai saw quhar at the queyn
 Towart the ost come ridand sobyrly,
 And fyfty ladyis was in hyr cumpany,
 Wallyt¹¹ off wit and demyt¹² off renoun,
 Sum wedowis war, and sum off religioun;
 And sewyn preistis that entrit war in age.
 Wallace to sic¹³ did neuir gret owtrage,
 Bot gyff till him thai maid a gret offens.
 Thus prochyt thai on towart thar presens.
 At the palyoun quhar thai the lyoun saw
 To ground thai lycht, and syne on kneis can faw;

¹ pavilion.² make ready for the mass.³ began to array himself.⁴ shining shoon.
⁵ richly.⁶ Battle greaves.⁷ sure.⁸ vambraces.⁹ untimely hap.¹⁰ across.¹¹ Chosen.
¹² judged.¹³ such.

Prayand for pece thai cry with petous cher.
 Erl Malcom said, "Our chyftayn is nocht her."
 He bad hyr rys, and said it was nocht rycht,

¹ serving wight. A queyn on kneis till ony lavar wycht¹.

Wp by the hand the gud erll has hyr tayn;
 Atour the bent to Wallace ar thai gayn.
 Quhen scho him saw scho wald haiff knelyt doune;
 In armys sone he caught this queyn with croun,
 And kyssyt hyr with-outyn wordis mor;
 Sa dyd he neuir to na Sotheron befor.

² may. "Madem," he said, "rycht welcum mot² ye be;
 How plessis yow our ostyng for to se?"

[The Scots lords and English ladies dine together, and afterwards the queen sues for peace. All her arguments, however, are in vain, and when Wallace recounts at length the woes of Scotland and his own wrongs the queen herself weeps for pity.]

³ fair talk helped her nothing. The queyn fand weyll langage no-thing hyr bet³;

⁴ overcome. Scho trowit with gold that he mycht be our-set⁴.

Thre thousand pound off fynest gold so red
 Scho gert be brocht to Wallace in that sted.
 "Madeym," he said, "na sic tribut we craiff.

A-nothir mendis we wald off Ingland haiff,
 Or we ratur fra this regioun agayn,
 Off your fals blud that has our elderis slayn.

⁵ realm. For all the gold and ryches ye in ryng⁵,
 Ye get no pess, but desir off your king."

Quhen scho saw weill, gold mycht hyr nocht releiff,
 Sum part in sport scho thought him for to preiff.

⁶ called. 'Wallace,' scho said, 'yhe war clepyt⁶ my luff.

⁷ courageously. Mor baundounly⁷ I maid me for to pruff,
 Traistand tharfor your rancour for to slak.

Me-think ye suld do sum-thing for my saik.
 Rycht wysly he maid ansuer to the queyn.
 "Madem," he said, "and verité war seyn
 That ye me luffyt, I awcht¹ yow luff agayn. 1 owe.
 Thir wordis all ar no-thing bot in wayn.
 Sic luff as that is nothing till awance,
 To tak a lak², and syne get no plesance. 2 reproach.
 In spech off luff suttell ye Sotheroun ar;
 Ye can ws mok, suppos ye se no mar."
 'In London,' scho said, 'for yow I sufferyt blaym;
 Our consall als will lauch quhen we cum haym.
 So may thai say, wemen ar fers³ off thoct 3 quick, eager.
 To sek frendschip, and syne can get rycht nocht!'
 "Madem," he said, "we wait⁴ how ye ar send; 4 understand.
 Yhe trow we haiff bot litill for to spend.
 Fyrst with your gold, for ye ar rych and wys⁵, 5 crafty.
 Yhe wald ws blynd, sen Scottis ar so nys⁶: 6 uncrafty.
 Syn plesand wordis off yow and ladyis fayr,
 As quha suld dryff the byrdis till a swar⁷ 7 snare.
 With the small pype, for it most fresche will call.
 Madem, as yit ye ma nocht tempt ws all.
 Gret part off gud is left amang our kyn;
 In Ingland als we fynd enewch to wyn."
 Abayssyt⁸ scho was to mak ansuer him till. 8 At a loss.
 'Der schyr,' scho said, 'sen this is at your will;
 Wer or pess, quhat-so yow likis best,
 Lat your hye witt and gud consaill degest⁹. 9 deliberate.
 "Madem," he said, "now sall ye wndirstand
 The resoune quhy that I will mak na band.
 With yow, ladyis, I can na trewis bynd;
 For your fals king her-efir sone wald fynd,

Quhen he saw tyme, to brek it at his will,
 And playnly say he grantyt nocht thartill.
 Than had we nayn bot ladyis to repruff.
 That sall he nocht, be God that is abuff.
 Vpon wemen I will na wer begyn;
 On you in faith no worschip is to wyn.
 All the haill pass apon him-selff he sall tak,
 Off pees or wer quhat hapnyt we to mak."
 The queyn grantyt his ansuer sufficient;

* the remainder. So dyd the layff² in place that was present.

His delyuerance thai held off gret awaill,

² potent. And stark² enewch to schaw to thair consaill.

Wa was the qweyn hyr tra²waill helpyt nocht.

The gold scho tuk, that thai had with hyr brocht;

On-to the ost rycht frely scho it gayff

Till euiryk man that likyt for till haiff.

Till menstraillis, harroldis, scho delt haboundanlé,

Besekand thaim hyr frend at thai wald be.

Quhen Wallace saw the fredom off the queyn,

Sadly he said, "The suth weyll has beyn seyn,

Wemen may tempt the wysest at is wrocht.

³ gentlehood. Your gret gentrice³ it sall neuir be for nocht.

We [yow] assure our ost sall mwff na-thing

Quhyll tym ye may send message fra your king.

Gyff it be sa at he accord and we,

Than for your saik it sall the bettir be.

Your harroldys als sall saiffly cum and ga;

⁴ no more. For your fredom we sall trowbill na ma⁴."

⁵ times. Scho thankit him off his grant mony sys⁵,

And all the ladyis apon a gudly wys.

Glaidly thai drank, the queyn and gud Wallace,

Thir ladyis als and lordis in that place.
 Hyr leyff scho tuk with-out langar abaid;
 Fyve myle that nycht south till a nonry raid.
 Apoun the morn till London passit thai,
 In Westmenster, quhar at the consaill lay.

The Red Reiver.

[Peace is presently arranged, Edward giving up all Scottish fortresses and prisoners. Three years later, the affairs of all Scotland having been set in order, Wallace is invited by the French king to visit France, and leaving Sir James Stewart at the head of the government, he sets sail. At sea his vessel is attacked by Longueville, the Red Reiver, with sixteen ships; but by his personal address and strength, seizing the pirate captain as he leaps on board, Wallace captures the whole fleet.]

Wallace desyryt to talk mor with this man.
 Sadly he sperd¹, "Off quhat land was thou born?" ¹ Seriously he asked.
 'Off France,' quoth he, 'and my eldris befor;
 And thar we had sumpart off heretage:
 Yet fers fortoun thus brocht me in a rage.'
 Wallace sperd, "How com thow to this lyff?"
 'Forsuth,' he said, 'bot throw a sudan stryff.
 So hapnyt me in-to the kingis presens
 Our raklesly to do our gret offens.
 A nobill man off gud fame and renoun
 That throw my deid was put to confusioun
 Dede off a straik; quhat nedis wordis mor?
 All helpyt nocht, thocht I repentyt full sor.
 Throw freyndys off the court I chapyt² off that place, ² escaped.
 And neur sen syn³ couth get the kingis grace. ³ since then.
 For my saik mony off my kyn gert thai de.

- And quhen I saw it mycht no bettir be,
 Bot leyff the land that me behuffyt o neid,
^{1 to Bordeaux I went.} Apon a day to Burdeous I yeid¹.
 Ane Inglis schip so gat I on a nycht,
^{2 expeditiously was prepared.} For sey lawbour that ernystfully was dycht².
^{3 gathered.} To me thar semblyt³ misdoaris, and weill mo ;
 And in schort tym we multiplyit so
 That thar wes few our power mycht withstand.
^{4 reigned long.} In tyranry thus haiff we rongyn lang⁴.
 This sexten yer I haiff beyn on the se,
 And doyn gret harm ; tharfor full wa is me.
 I savit nayn, for gold nor gret ransoun,
 Bot slew and drownyt in-to the se adoun.
 Fawour I did till folk off syndry land ;
 Bot Franchmen no frendschip with me fand,
 Thai gat no grace als fer as I mycht ryng.
^{5 called.} Als on the se I clypyt⁵ was a king.
 Now se I weyll that my fortoun is went,
 Vincust with ane ; that gerris me sair rapent.
 Quha wald haiff said, this sammyn day at morn,
 I suld with ane thus lychtly doun be born,
^{6 scorn.} In gret hething⁶ my men it wald haiff tayne.
^{7 overwhelmed.} My-selff trowit till [haiff] machit⁷ mony ane,
 Bot I haiff found the werray playn contrar.
 Her I gyff our roubry for euirmar ;
 In sic mysrewll I sall neuir armes ber,
^{8 use, manner.} Bot gyff it be in honest oys⁸ to wer.
 Now haiff I told part off my blyss and payn ;
^{9 show.} For Goddis saik sum kyndnes kyth⁹ agayn.
 My hart will brek bot I wyt quhat thou be
^{10 abated, reduced.} Thus outrageously that has rabutyt¹⁰ me.

For weill I wend¹ that leyffand had beyn non 1 deemed.
 Be fors off strenth mycht me as presoner ton
 Except Wallace, that has rademyt Scotland,
 The best is callyt this day beltyt with brand.
 In-till his wer war worschip for to wak², 2 travel.
 As now in warld I trow he has no mak³. 3 peer.
 Tharat he smylit, and said; "Frend, weill may be,
 Scotland had mystir⁴ off mony sic as he. 4 need.
 Quhat is thi naym? tell me; so haiff thow seill⁵!" 5 happiness.
 'Forsuth,' he said, 'Thomas of Longaweill.'
 "Weyll bruk⁶ thow it! all thus stentis⁷ our stryff: 6 enjoy.
 Schaip⁸ to pleyss God in mendyng off thi lyff. 7 stays.
 Thi faithfull freynd my-selff thinkis to be; 8 Endeavour.
 And als my nayme I sall sone tell to the.
 For chans off wer thou suld no murnyng mak;
 As werd⁹ will wyrk thi fortoun mon¹⁰ thou tak. 9 fate.
 I am that man that you awanss so hie, 10 must.
 And bot schort tym sen I come to the se.
 Off Scotland born, my rycht name is Wallace."
 On kneis he fell, and thankit God of grace;
 'I dar awow that yoldyn is my hand
 To the best man that beltis him with brand.
 Forsuth,' he said, 'this blythis me mekill mor
 Than off floryng ye gaiff me sixty scor.'
 Wallace ansuerd; "Sen thou art her throw chance,
 My purpos is, be this wiage, in France;
 And to the king sen I am boun to pass,
 To my reward thi pees I think to as."
 'Pes I wald haiff [fane] off my rychtwis king;
 And no langar in-to that realm to ryng¹¹, 11 reign.
 Than to tak leyff, and cum off it agayn.

In thi seruice I think for to ramayn.
 "Seruice," he said, "Thomas, that may nocht be,
 Bot gud frendschip, as I desir off the."
 Gart¹ draw the wyn, and ilk man mery maid;
 Be this the schippis was in the Rochell raid.

¹ Caused.

The rede blasonys thai had born in-to wer;
 The toun was sone in-till a sudane fer.
 The Rede Reiffar thai saw was at thair hand,
 The quhilk throu strenth mycht nayn agayne him
 stand.

Sum schippis fled, and sum the land has tain,
 Clariownys blew, and trumpattis mony ane.

² in commotion.

Quhen Wallace saw the pepill was on ster²
 He gaiff commaund na schip suld ner apper,
 Bot his awin barge in-to the hawyn gart draw.
 The folk was fayn quhen thai that senye³ saw;
 Rycht weyll thai knew in gold the rede lioun,
 Leit wp the port rasaut him in the toun,
 And sufferyt thaim, for all that he had brocht.
 The rede nawyn in-to the hawyn thai socht;
 On land thai went, quhar thai likit to pass.
 Rycht few thar wyst quhat Scottisman Wallace was;
 Bot weyll thai thocht he was a gudly man,
 And honouryt him in all the craft thai can.

³ ensign.

[Wallace carries Longueville in his suite to the French court.]

Sone eftir meit the king to parlour went,
 With gudly lordis; thar Wallace was present.
 Than commound thai off mony syndry thing;
 To spek with him gret desyr had the king.

At him he speryt off wer the gouernance.
 He ansuerd him with manly contenance
 Till euery poynt, als fer as he had feill¹,
 In Latyn tong rycht naturaly and weill.
 The king consaut sone throu his hie knowlage
 Quhat wermen oysyt be reyff² in thar passage.
 In-till his mynd the Rede Reiffar than was;
 Merwell he had how he leit Wallace pass.
 Till him he said, "Ye war sum-thing to blaym;
 Ye mycht haiff send, be our harrold fra haym,
 Eftir power to bryng yow throu the se."
 'God thank yow, schyr, tharoff ynewch had we.
 Feill³ men may pass quhar thai fynd na perell;
 Rycht few may kep quhar nayn is to assail.'
 "Wallace," he said, "tharoff merwell haiff I;
 A tyran ryngis in ire full cruelly
 Apon the se, that gret sorow has wrocht;
 Mycht we him get, it suld not be for nocht.
 Born off this land, a natyff man to me;
 Tharfor on ws the grettar harme dois he."
 Than Thomas quok, and changyt contenans;
 He hard the king his ewill deidis awans.
 Wallace beheld, and fenyait in a part⁴;
 'Forsuth,' he said, 'we fand nane in that art
 That proffryt ws sic wnkyndlynes.
 Bot with your leiff I spek in haymlynes,
 Trow ye be sycht ye couth that squier know?'
 "Full lang it war sen tym that I him saw.
 Bot thir wordis off him ar bot in wayn;
 Or he com her rycht gud men will be slayn."
 Than Wallace said, 'Her I haiff brocht with me,

¹ knowledge.² What men of war were wont by robbery (to do).³ Many.⁴ feigned a part.

Off likly men that was in our countré :

Quhilk off all thir wald ye call him most lik ?¹

¹ glanced.

² potent.

³ Examined.

Amang thaim blent² that ryoll roy most ryk³,

Wesyit³ thaim weill, bathe statur and curage,

Maner, makdome, thar fassoun and thar wésage.

Sadly he said, awysit sobyrly,

“That largest man, quhilk standis next yow by,

Wald I call him, be makdome to dewice.

Thir ar no thing bot wordis off office.”

Befor the king on kneis fell gud Wallace :

‘O ryoll roy, off hie honour and grace,

With waist wordis I will nocht yow trawail ;

Now I will spek sum-thing for myn awaill.

⁴ native, *lit.*
bairnhood.

⁵ injury.

Our barnat⁴ land has beyn our-set with wer,

With Saxonis blud that dois ws mekill der⁵,

Slayn our eldris, distroyit our rychtwys blud,

Waistyt our realm off gold and othir gud.

And ye ar her, in mycht and ryolté,

Yow suld haiff ey till our aduersité,

And ws support, throu kyndnes off the band

Quhilk is conserwyt betuix yow and Scotland.

As I am her, at your charge, for plesance,

⁶ way of life.

⁷ acquiring.

My lyflat⁶ is bot honest chewysance⁷.

Flour off realmys forsuth is this regioun ;

⁸ guerdon.

To my reward I wald haiff gret gardoun⁸.

“Wallace,” he said, “now ask what ye wald haiff.

Gud gold or land sall nocht be lang to craiff.”

Wallace ansuerd, ‘So ye it grant to me,

Quhat I wald haiff it sall sone chosyn be.’

“Quhat-euir yhe ask that is in this regioun,

Ye sall it haiff, except my wyff and croun.”

He thankit hym off his gret kyndlynes.
 ‘My reward all sall be askyng off grace,
 Pees to this man I broucht with me throu chans.
 Her I quytcleym¹ all othir gyftis in Frans. ¹ quit claim of.
 This samyn is he, gyff ye knaw him weill,
 That we off spak, Thomas off Longaweill.
 Be rygour ye desyryt he suld be slayn;
 I him restor in-to your grace agayn.
 Rasaiff him fayr, as liege man off your land.’

The king marweld, and couth in study stand;
 Perfytly knew that it was Longaweill;
 He him forgaiff his trespass euirilkdeill², ² every whit.
 Bot for his saik that had him hydder brocht;
 For gold or land ellis he gat it nocht.
 “Wallace,” he said, “I had leuir³ off gud land ³ leifer, rather.
 Thre hundreth pund haiff sesyt⁴ in thi hand. ⁴ paid.
 That I haiff said sall be grantyt in plain;
 Her I restor Thomas to pes agayn,
 Derer to me than euir he was befor,
 All for your saik, thocht it war mekill mor.”

Quhen Thomas was restoryt to his rycht
 Off hys awin hand the king has maid him knyght.
 Eftir he gaiff stayt to his nerrest ayr,
 And maid him-selff with Wallace for to fayr.
 Thus he was brocht fra naym off reyff, throu cace,
 Be sudand chans off him and wicht Wallace.

The Taking of Lochleven.

[While Wallace assists the French in their wars in Guyenne, news of his deeds reaches the English court. Advantage is taken of his absence to invade Scotland, and soon the patriotic party there is driven to extremity. The Warden is invited to return, lands at Montrose, retakes Perth, and fights the battle of Black Innes. Presently the only stronghold in that part of Scotland remaining in English hands is the fortalice of Lochleven.]

- Bot in Lochlewyn thair lay a cumpané,
 1 island. Apon that inch¹ in a small hous thai dycht²;
 2 lay armed. Castell was nayn, bot wallyt with water wicht³.
 3 strong. Besyd Carraill thai semblyt⁴ Wallace beforn;
 4 assembled. His purpos was for till assay Kyngorn.
 5 named. A knycht hecht⁵ Gray than captane in it was;
 6 manner. Be schort awys⁶ purpos he tuk to pas.
 7 Rather. Erar⁷ he wald bid chalans off his king
 Than with Wallace to rakyn for sic a thing.
 That hous thai tuk, and litill tary maid.
 Vpon the morn, with-outyn mar abaid,
 Atour the mur, quhar thai a tryst had set,
 Ner Scotlandis Well thair luyng tuk but let.
 Eftir souper Wallace bad thaim ga rest:
 "My-selff will walk, me-think it may be best."
 8 without re- As he commaundynt, but gruching⁸ thai haiff don.
 pining. In-to thar slep Wallace him graithit⁹ son,
 9 armed. Past to Lochlewyn as it was ner mydnycht,
 Auchtene with him, at he hed warnyt rycht.
 10 examine. Thir men wend weill he come to wesye¹⁰ it.
 "Falows," he said, "I do yow weill to wyt;
 Considyr weill this place, and wndirstand
 11 hurt. That it may do full gret scaith¹¹ to Scotland.

Out off the south and power cum thaim till,
 Thai may tak in, and kep it at thair awn will.
 Apon yon inche rycht mony men may be,
 And syn wsche out, thair tym quhen at thai se.
 To bid lang her we may nocht wpon chans,
 Yon folk has fud, trast weill, at sufficians.
 Wattir fra thaim forsuth can nocht be set;
 Sum wthyr wyll ws worthis¹ for to get. 1 behoves.
 Yhe sall remayn her at this port all still,
 And I my-selff the boit sall bryng yow till."
 Thair-with in haist his weid off castis he:
 "Apon yon sid na wachman can I se;"
 Held on his sark, and tuk his suerd so gud
 Band on his nek, and syn lap in the flud,
 And our he swam, for lattyng² fand he nocht. 2 hindrance.
 The boit he tuk and till hys men it brocht,
 Arayit him weill, and wald no langar bid,
 Bot passyt in, rowit to the tothir sid.
 The inch thai tuk with suerdis drawyn in hand,
 And sparyt nayn that thai befor thaim fand;
 Strak duris wp, stekyt men quhar thai lay;
 Apon the Sothroun thus sadly semblyt thai.
 Thretty thai slew that was in that samyn place;
 To mak defens the Inglismen had no space.
 Thar women fyve Wallace send off that sted;
 Woman nor barne he gart neur put to dede.
 The gud thai tuk, as it had beyn thair awyn.
 Than Wallace said, "Falowis, I mak yow knawin,
 The purwyaunce that is with-in this wany³ 3 habitation.
 We will nocht tyne⁴. Ger sembyll all at anys, 4 lose.
 Gar warn Ramsay and our gud men ilkane⁵; 5 each one.

¹ provender. I will remayn quhill this warnstor¹ be gane :”
² put in guard. Send furth a man, thair horsis put to kep²,
 Drew wp the boit, syne beddys tuk to sleip.

Wallace power, quhilk Scotland Well ner lay,
 Befor the son thai myssyt him away.
³ lament. Sum menyng³ maid, and merweillyt off that cace.
 Ramsay bad, ‘Ces, and murn nocht for Wallace.
 It is for gud at he is fra us went ;
⁴ verity. It sall ye se, trast weill, in werrament⁴.
⁵ pledge. My hed to wed⁵, Lochlewyn he past to se :
 Bot that is thar, no Inglisman know we
 In all this land, betwix thir watters left.
 Tithandis off hym ye sall se son hereft.’

As thai about was talkand on this wys
 A message com and chargyt thaim to rys.
 “My lord,” he said, “to dyner has yow cald
 In-till Lochlewyn, quhilk is a ryoll hald.
 Ye sall fair weyll, tharfor put off all sorow.”

Description of Wallace.

[Wallace surprises Dumbarton and Rosneath, and Douglas rises in the south and takes Sanquhar. Dundee is the last strength remaining in English hands in Scotland, and to it the Warden lays siege. News at this point is carried to King Edward, then in France. He hastens home and prepares to invade Scotland with a hundred thousand men. At the same time the French send a herald to ask if Wallace wishes succour. With him the herald brings a French description of the hero.]

The wyt¹ off Frans thocht Wallace to commend;
 In-to Scotland, with this harrold thai send
 Part off his deid, and als the discriptioun
 Off him tane thar be men off discretioun,
 Clerkis, knychtis, and harroldys, that him saw;
 Bot I hereoff can nocht rehers thaim aw.
 Wallace statur, off gretnes, and off hycht,
 Was jugyt thus, be discretioun off rycht,
 That saw him bath dissembill and in weid²; ¹ unclad and in
armour.
 Nyne quartaris large he was in lenth indeid;
 Thryd part lenth in schuldrys braid was he,
 Rycht sembly, strang, and lusty for to se;
 Hys lymmys gret, with stalwart pais and sound,
 Hys browys hard, his armes gret and round;
 His handis maid rycht lik till a pawmer³, ² palm-leaf.
 Off manlik mak, with naless gret and cler;
 Proportionyt lang and fayr was his wesage;
 Rycht sad off spech, and abill in curage;
 Braid breyst and heych³, with sturdy crag⁴ and gret; ³ high.
⁴ neck.
 His lyppys round, his noys was squar and tret⁵; ⁵ long and well
proportioned.
 Bowand⁶ bron haryt, on browis and breis⁷ lycht, ⁶ Wavy.
⁷ eyebrows.
 Cler aspre⁸ eyn, lik dyamondis brycht. ⁸ sharp.
 Wndyr the chyn, on the left syd, was seyn,
 Be hurt, a wain; his colour was sangweyn.
 Woundis he had in mony diuers place,
 Bot fair and weill kepyt was his face.
 Off ryches he kepyt no propyr thing;
 Gaiff as he wan, lik Alexander the king.
 In tym off pes mek as a maid was he;
 Quhar wer approchyt the rycht Ector was he.
 To Scottis men a gret credens he gaiff;

Bot knawin enemys thai couth him nocht disayff.
 Thir properteys was knawin in-to Frans,
 Off him to be in gud remembrans.
 Maistir Jhon Blayr that patron couth rasaiff,
 In Wallace buk brewyt¹ it with the layff.

¹ wrote.

Wallace's Meeting with Bruce.

[Wallace defeats the English advance guard of ten thousand under Woodstock on Sheriffmuir, but, on the eve of encountering Edward himself, Comyn, brother of the Countess of March, sows dissension between the Warden and the Stewart. Stewart claims by virtue of his office to lead the vanguard; Wallace refuses, and withdraws from action. In consequence, in the great battle of Falkirk, Stewart is defeated and slain, chiefly by the valour of Bruce, who fights on the English side. In defending the Scottish retreat Wallace is wounded by Bruce, and Sir John the Graham is killed.]

Quhen Wallace saw this knyght to dede was wrocht

² mastered.

The pytuous payn so sor thyrlyt² his thocht

³ nature.

All out off kynd³ it alteryt his curage;

⁴ mad.

Hys wyt in wer was than bot a wod⁴ rage.

Hys hors him bur in feild quhar-so him lyst;

For off him-selff as than litill he wyst.

Lik a wyld best that war fra reson rent,

As wytlace wy in-to the ost he went,

⁵ driving.

Dingand⁵ on hard; quhat Sotheroun he rycht hyt,

Straucht apon hors agayn mycht neuir syt.

⁶ many.

In-to that rage full feill⁶ folk he dang down;

⁷ was cleared a
great space.

All hym about was reddyt a gret rowm⁷.

[With difficulty the Scottish troops pass Carron Water, the tide being in; and Wallace's own horse, having been wounded, falls dead on gaining the further bank.]

To the Torwod he bad the ost suld ryd.
 Kerlé and he past wpon Caroun syd,
 Behaldand our¹ wpon the south party. ¹ over.
 Bruce formast com and can² on Wallace cry, ² began.
 "Quhat art thou thar?" 'A man,' Wallace can say.
 The Bruce ansuerd, "That has thou prewyt to-day.
 Abyd," he said, "thou nedis nocht now to fle."
 Wallace ansuerd; 'I eschew nocht for the.
 Bot that power has thi awn ner fordon;
 Amendis off this, will God, we sall haiff son.'
 "Langage off the," the Bruce said, "I desyr."
 'Say furth,' quoth he; 'thou may for litill hyr³. ³ cost (?)
 Ryd fra that ost, and gar thaim bid with Beik.
 I wald fayn her quhat thou likis to speik.'
 The ost baid styll, the Bruce passyt thaim fra;
 He tuk wyth him bot a Scot that hecht Ra.
 Quhen that the Bruce out off thair heryng wer
 He turned in, and this question can sper:
 "Quhy wyrkis thou thus, and mycht in gud pess be?"
 Than Wallace said, 'Bot in defawt off the.
 Throuch thi falsheid thin awn wyt has mys kend⁴. ⁴ mistaken.
 I cleyrn no rycht, bot wald this land defend
 At thou wndoys throu thi fals cruell deid.
 Thou hast tynt twa had beyn worth fer mair meid,
 On this ilk day, with a gud king to found⁵, ⁵ to go.
 Na⁶ fyve mylyon off fynest gold so round ⁶ Than.
 That euir was wrocht in werk or ymage brycht.
 I trow in warld was nocht a bettir knyght
 Than was the gud Graym off trewth and hardement.'
 Teris tharwith fra Wallace eyn doun went.

[After further bitterly reproaching Bruce for fighting against his own kingdom Wallace retires to his men.]

¹ separated.

Thus thai depertyt¹. The Bruce past his way,
Till Lithqwo raid, quhar that king Eduuard lay,
The feild had left, and luyt a south the toun,
To souper set. As Bruce at the palyoun
So entryt in, and saw wacand his seit,
No wattir he tuk, bot maid him to the meit.
Fastand he was, and had beyn in gret dreid;
Bludyt was all his wapynnys and his weid.
Sotheroun lordys scornyt him in termys rud,
And said, "Behald, yon Scot ettis his awn blud."
The king thoct ill thai maid sic derisioun;
He bad haiff watter to Bruce off Huntyntoun.
Thai bad him wesche; he said that wald he nocht:
"This blud is myn, that hurtis most my thoct."

² had remorse for.

Sadly the Bruce than in his mynd remordyt²
Thai wordis suth that Wallace had him recordyt.
Than rewyt he sar, fra resoun had him knawin,
At blud and land suld all lik beyn his awin.
With thaim he was lang or he couth get away;
Bot contrar Scottis he faucht nocht fra that day.

Wallace's Lament for the Graham.

³ manner.

Wallace slepyt bot a schort quhill and raiss.
To rewill the ost on a gud mak³ he gais
Till erll Malcom, Ramsay, and Lundy wicht;
With fyve thousand in a battaill thaim dycht.
Wallace, Lawder, and Crystell off Cetoun,

Fyve thousand led, and Wallace off Ricardtoun,
 Full weyll arayit in-till thair armour clen,
 Past to the feild quhar that the chas had ben;
 Amang the ded men sekand the worthiast,
 The corss off Graym, for quham he murned mast.

Quhen thai him fand, and gud Wallace him saw,
 He lychtyt doun, and hynt¹ him fra thaim aw ¹ took.
 In armys vp. Behaldand his pail face,
 He kyssyt him, and cryt full oft, "Allace!
 My best brothir in warld that euir I had!
 My afald² freynd quhen I was hardest stad! ² honest.
 My hop, my heill³, thow was in maist honour! ³ covering, de-
 My faith, my help, my strenthiast in stour⁴! ⁴ storm. fence.
 In the was wyt, fredom, and hardines⁵; ⁵ sense, generosi-
 In the was treuth, manheid, and nobilnes; <sup>ty, and bold-
 In the was rewl, in the was gouernans; ^{ness.}
 In the was wertu with-outyn warians;
 In the lawté⁶, in the was gret largnas⁷; ⁶ loyalty.
 In the gentrice⁸, in the was stedfastnas. ⁷ liberality.
 Thow was gret caus off wynnyng off Scotland, ⁸ gentleness.
 Thocht I began and tuk the wer on hand.
 I wow to God that has the warld in wauld⁹ ⁹ under sway.
 Thi dede sall be to Sotheroun full der sauld.
 Martyr thow art for Scotlandis rycht and me;
 I sall the wenge, or ellis tharfor de."</sup>

Was na man thar fra wepyng mycht hym rafreyn
 For loss off him, quhen thai hard Wallace pleyn.

: buried.

Thai caryit him with worschip and dolour ;
In the Fawkyrk graithit^r him in sepultour.

[Presently the Scots fall upon the English quarters in Linlithgow, put Edward to utter rout, and drive him from the country. Wallace then assembles the lords at Perth, resigns the Wardenship, and retires to France. He is made lord of Guyenne, which he wins for the French king. But while the envy of the French leaders is excited by his prowess, Scotland is again over-run by her enemies. Wallace is implored to come back. Once more he returns, once more passes through a series of adventures, and once more sets Scotland free. Then it is that King Edward, despairing of force, determines upon craft. Sir John Menteith, Wallace's "gossip," is bribed with gold and promises, and undertakes the capture. Wallace has invited Bruce to take the crown, and has been asked to meet the latter privately on Glasgow moor. He is lying accordingly with a single companion at Robroyston in that neighbourhood when the house is surrounded at dead of night by Menteith, and through the treachery of a servant the hero is taken weaponless in his sleep. He is carried to London, arraigned at Westminster Hall as a traitor, and executed with all the barbarity of the time.]

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